THE

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

OF

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

VOLUME FOURTH.

CONTAINING VOL. FIRST OF THE

CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.

PERTH:

PRINTED BY R. MORISON JUNIOR,

FOR R. MORISON AND SON, BOOKSELLERS, PERTH;
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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

CITIZEN OF THE WORLD:

OR,

LETTERS

FROM A

CHINESE PHILOSOPHER,

RESIDING IN LONDON,

TO HIS

FRIENDS IN THE EAST.

VOLUME FIRST.

PERTH:

PRINTED BY R. MORISON JUNIOR,

FOR R. MORISON AND SON, BOOKSELLERS, PERTH; N. R. CHEYNE, EDINBURGH; AND W. COKE, LEITH.

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THE

EDITOR's PREFACE.

THE ſchoolmen had formerly a very exact way of computing the abilities of their Saints or Authors. Eſcobar, for inſtance, was ſaid to have learning as five, genius as four, and gravity as ſeven. Caramuel was greater than he. His learning was as eight, his genius as ſix, and his gravity as thirteen. Were I to eſtimate the merits of our Chineſe Philoſopher by the ſame ſcale, I would not heſitate to ſtate his genius ſtill higher; but as to his learning and gravity, theſe I think might ſafely be marked as nine hundred and ninety-nine, within one degree of abſolute frigidity.

Yet upon his firſt appearance here, many were angry not to find him as ignorant as a Tripoline ambaſſador, or an envoy from Mujac. They were ſurpriſed to find a man born ſo far from London, that ſchool of prudence and wiſdom, endued even with a moderate capacity. They expreſſed the ſame ſurpriſe at his knowledge that the Chineſe do

at ours. "How comes it (ſaid they), that the Europeans, ſo remote from China, think with ſo much juſtice and preciſion? They have never read our books, they ſcarcely know even our letters, and yet they talk and reaſon juſt as we do."* The truth is, the Chineſe and we are pretty much alike. Different degrees of refinement, and not of diſtance, mark the diſtinctions among mankind. Savages of the moſt oppoſite climates have all but one character of improvidence and rapacity; and tutored nations, however ſeparate, make uſe of the very ſame methods to procure refined enjoyment.

The diſtinctions of polite nations are few; but ſuch as are peculiar to the Chineſe, appear in every page of the following correſpondence. The metaphors and alluſions are all drawn from the Eaſt. Their formality our author carefully preſerves. Many of their favourite tenets in morals are illuſtrated. The Chineſe are always conciſe, ſo is he; ſimple, ſo is he. The Chineſe are grave and ſententious, ſo is he. But in one particular, the reſemblance is peculiarly ſtriking: the Chineſe are often dull; and ſo is he. Nor has my aſſiſtance been wanting. We are told in an old romance, of a certain knight-errant and his horſe who contracted

* Le Comte, vol. I. p. 219.

contracted an intimate friendſhip. The horſe moſt uſually bore the knight, but in caſes of extraordinary diſpatch, the knight returned the favour, and carried his horſe. Thus in the intimacy between my author and me, he has uſually given me a lift of his eaſtern ſublimity, and I have ſometimes given him a return of my colloquial eaſe.

Yet it appears ſtrange in this ſeaſon of panegyric, when ſcarce an author paſſes unpraiſed either by his friends or himſelf, that ſuch merit as our Philoſopher's ſhould be forgotten. While the epithets of ingenious, copious, elaborate, and refined, are laviſhed among the mob, like medals at a coronation, the lucky prizes fall on every ſide, but not one on him. I could on this occaſion make myſelf melancholy, by conſidering the capriciouſneſs of public taſte, or the mutability of fortune; but during this fit of morality, leſt my reader ſhould ſleep, I'll take a nap myſelf, and when I awake tell him my dream.

I imagined the Thames was frozen over, and I ſtood by its ſide. Several booths were erected upon the ice, and I was told by one of the ſpectators, that FASHION FAIR was going to begin. He added, that every author who would carry his works there, might probably find a very good reception. I was

reſolved however to obſerve the humours of the place in ſafety from the ſhore, ſenſible that ice was at beſt precarious, and having been always a little cowardly in my ſleep.

Several of my acquaintance ſeemed much more hardy than I, and went over the ice within trepidity. Some carried their works to the fair on ſledges, ſome on carts, and thoſe which were more voluminous were conveyed in waggons. Their temerity aſtoniſhed me. I knew their cargoes were heavy, and expected every moment they would have gone to the bottom. They all entered the fair, however, in ſafety, and each ſoon after returned to my great ſurpriſe, highly ſatisfied with his entertainment, and the bargains he had brought away.

The ſucceſs of ſuch numbers at laſt began to operate upon me. If theſe, cried I, meet with favour and ſafety, ſome luck may, perhaps, for once attend the unfortunate. I am reſolved to make a new adventure. The furniture frippery, and fireworks of China, have long been faſhionably bought up. I'll try the fair with a ſmall cargo of Chineſe morality. If the Chineſe have contributed to vitiate our taſte, I'll try how far they can help to improve

prove our underſtanding. But as others have driven into the market in waggons, I'll cautiouſly begin by venturing with a wheel-barrow. Thus reſolved, I baled up my goods, and fairly ventured; when, upon juſt entering the fair, I fancied the ice that had ſupported an hundred waggons before, cracked under me, and wheel-barrow and all went to the bottom.

Upon awaking from my reverie, with the fright, I could not help wiſhing that the pains taken in giving this correſpondence an Engliſh dreſs had been employed in contriving new political ſyſtems, or new plots for farces. I might then have taken my ſtation in the world, either as a poet or a philoſopher; and made one in thoſe little ſocieties where men club to raiſe each others reputation. But at preſent I belong to no particular claſs. I reſemble one of thoſe ſolitary animals, that has been forced from its foreſt to gratify human curioſity. My earlieſt wiſh was to eſcape unheeded through life: but I have been ſet up for halfpence, to fret and ſcamper at the end of my chain. Though none are injured by my rage, I am naturally too ſavage to court any friends by fawning; too obſtinate to be taught new tricks; and too improvident to mind what may happen: I am appeaſed, though not contented;

tented: too indolent for intrigue, and too timid to push for favour, I am—But what signifies what I am.

Ἔγγιε καὶ σὺ τύχη, μεγα χαιρετ· τον λελμενε υρον,
Οὐδεν ἐμοι χ' υμιν· παιζετι τυς μετ' ἐμε.

Fortune and Hope adieu! I see my Port,
Too long your dupe; be others now your Sport.

THE CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.

LETTER I.

To Mr ****, *Merchant in London.*

SIR, *Amſterdam.*

YOURS of the 13th inſtant, covering two bills, one on Meſſ. R. and D. value 478l. 10s. and the other on Mr ****, value 285l, duly came to hand; the former of which met with honour, but the other has been trifled with, and I am afraid will be returned proteſted.

The bearer of this is my friend, therefore let him be yours. He is a native of Honan in China, and one who did me ſignal ſervices when he was a mandarine, and I a factor at Canton. By frequently converſing with the Engliſh there, he has learn-

ed the language, though entirely a ſtranger to their manners and cuſtoms. I am told he is a philoſopher; I am ſure he is an honeſt man; that to you will be his beſt recommendation, next to the conſideration of his being the friend of, Sir,

Yours &c.

LETTER II.

From LIEN CHI ALTANGI *to* ****, *Merchant in* AMSTERDAM.

FRIEND OF MY HEART, *Lond.*

"MAY the wings of peace reſt upon thy dwelling, and the ſhield of conſcience preſerve thee from vice and miſery:" for all thy favours accept my gratitude and eſteem, the only tributes a poor philoſophic wanderer can return. Sure fortune is reſolved to make me unhappy, when ſhe gives others a power of teſtifying their friendſhip by actions, and leaves me only words to expreſs the ſincerity of mine.

I am perfectly ſenſible of the delicacy by which you endeavour to leſſen your own merit and my obligations.

obligations. By calling your late inſtances of friendſhip only a return for former favours, you would induce me to impute to your juſtice what I owe to your generoſity.

The ſervices I did you at Canton, juſtice, humanity, and my office bade me perform; thoſe you have done me ſince my arrival at Amſterdam, no laws obliged you to, no juſtice required; even half your favours would have been greater than my moſt ſanguine expectations.

The ſum of money therefore which you privately conveyed into my baggage, when I was leaving Holland, and which I was ignorant of till my arrival in London, I muſt beg leave to return. You have been bred a merchant, and I a ſcholar: You conſequently love money better than I. You can find pleaſure in ſuperfluity, I am perfectly contented with what is ſufficient: take therefore what is yours; it may give you ſome pleaſure, even though you have no occaſion to uſe it; my happineſs it cannot improve, for I have already all that I want.

My paſſage by ſea from Rotterdam to England was more painful to me than all the journies I ever made on land. I have traverſed the immeaſurable

wilds of Mogul Tartary; felt all the rigours of Siberian ſkies. I have had my repoſe an hundred times diſturbed by invading ſavages, and have ſeen without ſhrinking, the deſart ſands riſe like a troubled ocean all around me: againſt theſe calamities I was armed with reſolution; but in my paſſage to England, though nothing occurred that gave the mariners any uneaſineſs, yet to one who was never at ſea before, all was a ſubject of aſtoniſhment and terror. To find the land diſappear, to ſee our ſhip mount the waves ſwift as an arrow from the Tartar bow, to hear the wind howling through the cordage, to feel a ſickneſs which depreſſes even the ſpirits of the brave; theſe were unexpected diſtreſſes, and conſequently aſſaulted me unprepared to receive them.

You men of Europe think nothing of a voyage by ſea. With us of China, a man who has been from ſight of land is regarded upon his return with admiration. I have known ſome provinces where there is not even a name for the ocean. What a ſtrange people therefore am I got amongſt, who have founded an empire on this unſtable element, who build cities upon billows that riſe higher than the mountains of Tipartala, and make the deep more formidable than the wildeſt tempeſt.

Such

Such accounts as theſe, I muſt confeſs, were my firſt motives for ſeeing England. Theſe induced me to undertake a journey of ſeven hundred painful days, in order to examine its opulence, buildings, ſciences, arts, and manufactures, on the ſpot. Judge then my diſappointment on entering London, to ſee no ſigns of that opulence ſo much talked of abroad: wherever I turn, I am preſented with a gloomy ſolemnity in the houſes, the ſtreets, and the inhabitants: none of that beautiful gilding which makes a principal ornament in Chineſe architecture. The ſtreets of Nankin are ſometimes ſtrewed with gold leaf; very different are thoſe of London: in the midſt of their pavements, a great lazy puddle moves muddily along; heavy laden machines, with wheels of unweildy thickneſs, crowd up every paſſage; ſo that a ſtranger, inſtead of finding time for obſervation, is often happy if he has time to eſcape from being cruſhed to pieces.

The houſes borrow very few ornaments from architecture; their chief decoration ſeems to be a paltry piece of painting, hung out at their doors or windows, at once a proof of their indigence and vanity—their vanity, in each having one of thoſe pictures expoſed to public view; and their indigence, in being unable to get them better painted.

In this reſpect, the fancy of their painters is alſo deplorable. Could you believe it? I have ſeen five black lions and three blue boars, in leſs than a circuit of half a mile; and yet you know that animals of theſe colours are no where to be found, except in the wild imaginations of Europe.

From theſe circumſtances in their buildings, and from the diſmal looks of the inhabitants, I am induced to conclude that the nation is actually poor; and that, like the Perſians, they make a ſplendid figure every where but at home. The proverb of Xixofou is, that a man's riches may be ſeen in his eyes; if we judge of the Engliſh by this rule, there is not a poorer nation under the ſun.

I have been here but two days, ſo will not be haſty in my deciſions; ſuch letters as I ſhall write to Fipſihi in Moſcow, I beg you'll endeavour to forward with all diligence; I ſhall ſend them open, in order that you may take copies or tranſlations, as you are equally verſed in the Dutch and Chineſe languages. Dear friend, think of my abſence with regret, as I ſincerely regret yours; even while I write, I lament our ſeparation. Farwel.

LETTER

LETTER III.

From LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *to the care of* FIPSIHI, *reſident in Moſcow; to be forwarded by the Ruſſian Caravan to* FUM HOAM, *firſt Preſident to the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

THINK not, O thou guide of my youth! that abſence can impair my reſpect, or interpoſing trackleſs deſarts blot your reverend figure from my memory. The farther I travel, I feel the pain of ſeparation with ſtronger force; thoſe ties that bind me to my native country, and you, are ſtill unbroken. By every remove, I only drag a greater length of chain.

Could I find aught worth tranſmitting from ſo remote a region as this to which I have wandered, I ſhould gladly ſend it; but inſtead of this, you muſt be contented with a renewal of my former profeſſions, and an imperfect account of a people with whom I am as yet but ſuperficially acquainted. The remarks of a man who has been but three days in the country, can only be thoſe obvious circumſtances which force themſelves upon the imagination: I conſider myſelf here as a newly created being

being introduced into a new world; every object ſtrikes with wonder and ſurpriſe. The imagination ſtill unſated, ſeems the only active principle of the mind. The moſt trifling occurrences give pleaſure, till the gloſs of novelty is worn away. When I have ceaſed to wonder, I may poſſibly grow wiſe; I may then call the reaſoning principle to my aid, and compare thoſe objects with each other, which were before examined without reflection.

Behold me then in London, gazing at the ſtrangers, and they at me. It ſeems they find ſomewhat abſurd in my figure; and had I been never from home, it is poſſible I might find an infinite fund of ridicule in theirs; but by long travelling I am taught to laugh at folly alone, and to find nothing truly ridiculous but villainy and vice.

When I had juſt quitted my native country, and croſſed the Chineſe wall, I fancied every deviation from the cuſtoms and manners of China was a departing from nature: I ſmiled at the blue lips and red fore-heads of the Tongueſe; and could hardly contain when I ſaw the Daures dreſs their heads with horns; the Oſtiacks powdered with red earth; and the Calmuck beauties tricked out in all the finery of ſheepſkin, appeared highly ridiculous; but

I ſoon

I ſoon perceived that the ridicule lay not in them but in me; that I falſely condemned others of abſurdity, becauſe they happened to differ from a ſtandard originally founded in prejudice or partiality.

I find no pleaſure therefore in taxing the Engliſh with departing from nature in their external appearance, which is all I yet know of their character; it is poſſible they only endeavour to improve her ſimple plan, ſince every extravagance in dreſs proceeds from a deſire of becoming more beautiful than nature made us; and this is ſo harmleſs a vanity, that I not only pardon but approve it: A deſire to be more excellent than others is what actually makes us ſo; and as thouſands find a livelihood in ſociety by ſuch appetites, none but the ignorant inveigh againſt them.

You are not inſenſible, moſt reverend Fum Hoam, what numberleſs trades, even among the Chineſe, ſubſiſt by the harmleſs pride of each other. Your noſe-borers, feet-ſwathers, tooth-ſtainers, eye-brow-pluckers, would all want bread, ſhould their neighbours want vanity. Theſe vanities, however, employ much fewer hands in China than in England; and a fine gentleman, or a fine lady,

lady, here dreſſed up to the faſhion, ſeems ſcarcely to have a ſingle limb that does not ſuffer ſome diſtortions from art.

To make a fine gentleman, ſeveral trades are required, but chiefly a barber: you have undoubtedly heard of the Jewiſh champion, whoſe ſtrength lay in his hair: one would think that the Engliſh were for placing all wiſdom there. To appear wiſe, nothing more is requiſite here, than for a man to borrow hair from the heads of all his neighbours, and clap it like a buſh on his own: the diſtributors of law and phyſic ſtick on ſuch quantities, that it is almoſt impoſſible, even in idea, to diſtinguiſh between the head and hair.

Thoſe whom I have been now deſcribing affect the gravity of the lion: thoſe I am going to deſcribe more reſemble the pert vivacity of ſmaller animals. The barber, who is ſtill maſter of the ceremonies, cuts their hair cloſe to the crown; and then, with a compoſition of meal and hog's lard, plaiſters the whole in ſuch a manner as to make it impoſſible to diſtinguiſh whether the patient wears a cap or a plaiſter: but to make the picture more perfectly ſtriking, conceive the tail of ſome beaſt, a greyhound's tail, or a pig's tail, for inſtance,

inſtance, appended to the back of the head, and reaching down to that place where tails in other animals are generally ſeen to begin; thus be-tailed and be-powdered, the man of taſte fancies he improves in beauty, dreſſes up his hard-featured face in ſmiles, and attempts to look hideouſly tender. Thus equipped, he is qualified to make love, and hopes for ſucceſs more from the powder on the outſide of his head, than the ſentiments within.

Yet when I conſider what ſort of a creature the fine lady is, to whom he is ſuppoſed to pay his addreſſes, it is not ſtrange to find him thus equipped in order to pleaſe. She is herſelf every whit as fond of powder, and tails, and hog's lard, as he: to ſpeak my ſecret ſentiments, moſt reverend Fum, the ladies here are horridly ugly; I can hardly endure the ſight of them; they no way reſemble the beauties of China: the Europeans have a quite different idea of beauty from us; when I reflect on the ſmall footed perfections of an Eaſtern beauty, how is it poſſible I ſhould have eyes for a woman whoſe feet are near ten inches long. I ſhall never forget the beauties of my native city of Nan-few. How very broad their faces; how very ſhort their noſes; how very little their eyes; how very thin their lips; how very black their teeth; the ſnow

on the tops of Bao is not fairer than their cheeks; and their eye-brows are ſmall as the line by the pencil of Quamſi. Here a lady with ſuch perfections would be frightful; Dutch and Chineſe beauties, indeed, have ſome reſemblance, but Engliſh women are entirely different; red cheeks, big eyes, and teeth of a moſt odious whiteneſs, are not only ſeen here, but wiſhed for; and then they have ſuch maſculine feet, as actually ſerve *ſome* for walking!

Yet, uncivil as nature has been, they ſeem reſolved to outdo her in unkindneſs; they uſe white powder, blue powder, and black powder, for their hair; and a red powder for the face on ſome particular occaſions.

They like to have the face of various colours, as among the Tartars of Coreki, frequently ſticking on, with ſpittle, little black patches on every part of it, except on the tip of the noſe, which I have never ſeen with a patch. You'll have a better idea of their manner of placing theſe ſpots, when I have finiſhed a map of an Engliſh face patched up to the faſhion, which ſhall ſhortly be ſent to increaſe your curious collection of paintings, medals, and monſters.

But

But what ſurpriſes me more than all the reſt is, what I have juſt now been credibly informed of by one of this country; "Moſt ladies here, ſays he, have two faces; one face to ſleep in, and another to ſhew in company: the firſt is generally reſerved for the huſband and family at home, the other put on to pleaſe ſtrangers abroad; the family-face is often indifferent enough, but the out-door one looks ſomething better; this is always made at the toilet, where the looking-glaſs, and toad-eater ſit in council and ſettle the complexion of the day."

I cannot aſcertain the truth of this remark; however, it is actually certain, that they wear more cloaths within doors than without; and I have ſeen a lady who ſeemed to ſhudder at a breeze in her own apartment, appear half naked in the ſtreets. Farewel.

LETTER IV.

To the ſame.

THE Engliſh ſeem as ſilent as the Japaneſe, yet vainer than the inhabitants of Siam. Upon my arrival, I attributed that reſerve to modeſty, which

I now find has its origin in pride. Condeſcend to addreſs them firſt, and you are ſure of their acquaintance; ſtoop to flattery, and you conciliate their friendſhip and eſteem. They bear hunger, cold, fatigue, and all the miſeries of life, without ſhrinking; danger only calls forth their fortitude; they even exult in calamity; but contempt is what they cannot bear. An Engliſhman fears contempt more than death; he often flies to death as a refuge from its preſſure; and dies when he fancies the world has ceaſed to eſteem him.

Pride ſeems the ſource not only of their national vices, but of their national virtues alſo. An Engliſhman is taught to love his king as his friend, but to acknowledge no other maſter than the laws which himſelf has contributed to enact. He deſpiſes thoſe nations, who, that one may be free, are all content to be ſlaves; who firſt lift a tyrant into terror, and then ſhrink under his power as if delegated from heaven. Liberty is echoed in all their aſſemblies, and thouſands might be found ready to offer up their lives for the ſound, though perhaps not one of all the number underſtands its meaning. The loweſt mechanic, however, looks upon it as his duty to be a watchful guardian of his country's freedom, and often uſes a language that might

might ſeem haughty, even in the mouth of the great emperor who traces his anceſtry to the moon.

A few days ago, paſſing by one of their priſons, I could not avoid ſtopping, in order to liſten to a dialogue which I thought might afford me ſome entertainment. The converſation was carried on between a debtor through the grate of his priſon, a porter who had ſtopped to reſt his burthen, and a ſoldier at the window. The ſubject was upon a threatened invaſion from France, and each ſeemed extremely anxious to reſcue his country from the impending danger. "For my part," cries the priſoner, "the greateſt of my apprehenſions is for our freedom; if the French ſhould conquer, what would become of Engliſh liberty? My dear friends, liberty is the Engliſhman's prerogative; we muſt preſerve that at the expence of our lives, of that the French ſhall never deprive us; it is not to be expected that men who are ſlaves themſelves, would preſerve our freedom ſhould they happen to conquer."—"Ay, ſlaves," cries the porter, "they are all ſlaves, fit only to carry burthens every one of them. Before I would ſtoop to ſlavery, may this be my poiſon," and he held the goblet in his hand, "may this be my poiſon—but I would ſooner liſt for a ſoldier."

The

The ſoldier, taking the goblet from his friend, with much awe, fervently cried out, "It is not ſo much our liberties as our religion that would ſuffer by ſuch a change: Ay, our religion, my lads. May the devil ſink me into flames," ſuch was the ſolemnity of his adjuration, "if the French ſhould come over, but our religion would be utterly undone." So ſaying, inſtead of a libation, he applied the goblet to his lips, and confirmed his ſentiments with a ceremony of the moſt perſevering devotion.

In ſhort, every man here pretends to be a politician; even the fair ſex are ſometimes found to mix the ſeverity of national altercation with the blandiſhments of love, and often become conquerors by more weapons of deſtruction than their eyes.

This univerſal paſſion for politics is gratified by Daily Gazettes, as with us at China. But as in ours, the emperor endeavours to inſtruct his people, in theirs the people endeavour to inſtruct the adminiſtration. You muſt not, however, imagine, that they who compile theſe papers have any actual knowledge of the politics, or the government of a ſtate; they only collect their materials from the oracle of ſome coffee-houſe, which oracle has himſelf gathered them the night before from a beau at

a gaming table, who has pillaged his knowledge from a great man's porter, who has had his information from the great man's gentleman who has invented the whole ſtory for his own amuſement the night preceding.

The Engliſh in general ſeem fonder of gaining the eſteem than the love of thoſe they converſe with: this gives a formality to their amuſements; their gayeſt converſations have ſomething too wiſe for innocent relaxation; though in company you are ſeldom diſguſted with the abſurdity of a fool, you are ſeldom lifted into rapture by thoſe ſtrokes of vivacity which give inſtant, though not permanent pleaſure.

What they want, however, in gaiety, they make up in politeneſs. You ſmile at hearing me praiſe the Engliſh for their politeneſs; you who have heard very different accounts from the miſſionaries at Pekin, who have ſeen ſuch a different behaviour in their merchants and ſeamen at home. But I muſt ſtill repeat it, the Engliſh ſeem more polite than any of their neighbours; their great art in this reſpect lies in endeavouring, while they oblige, to leſſen the force of the favour. Other countries are fond of obliging a ſtranger; but ſeem deſirous

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that he ſhould be ſenſible of the obligation. The Engliſh confer their kindneſs with an appearance of indifference, and give away benefits with an air as if they deſpiſed them.

Walking a few days ago between an Engliſhman and a Frenchman into the ſuburbs of the city, we were overtaken by a heavy ſhower of rain. I was unprepared; but they had each large coats which defended them from what ſeemed to me a perfect inundation. The Engliſhman ſeeing me ſhrink from the weather, accoſted me thus: "Pſha, man, what doſt ſhrink at? here, take this coat; I don't want it; I find it no way uſeful to me; I had as lief be without it." The Frenchman began to ſhew his politeneſs in turn. "My dear friend," cries he, "why won't you oblige me by making uſe of my coat; you ſee how well it defends me from the rain; I ſhould not chuſe to part with it to others, but to ſuch a friend as you, I could even part with my ſkin to do him ſervice."

From ſuch minute inſtances as theſe, moſt Reverend Fum Hoam, I am ſenſible your ſagacity will collect inſtruction. The volume of nature is the book of knowledge; and he becomes moſt wiſe who makes the moſt judicious ſelection. Farewel.

LETTER

LETTER V.

To the ſame.

I Have already informed you of the ſingular paſſion of this nation for politics. An Engliſhman, not ſatisfied with finding by his own proſperity the contending powers of Europe properly balanced, deſires alſo to know the preciſe value of every weight in either ſcale. To gratify this curioſity, a leaf of political inſtruction is ſerved up every morning with tea: when our politician has feaſted upon this, he repairs to a coffee-houſe, in order to ruminate upon what he has read, and increaſe his collection; from thence he proceeds to the ordinary, inquires what news, and treaſuring up every acquiſition there, hunts about all the evening in queſt of more, and carefully adds it to the reſt. Thus at night he retires home, full of the important advices of the day. When lo! awaking next morning, he finds the inſtructions of yeſterday a collection of abſurdity or palpable falſehood. This, one would think, a mortifying repulſe in the purſuit of wiſdom; yet our politician, no way diſcouraged, hunts on, in order to collect freſh materials, and in order to be again diſappointed.

I have often admired the commercial ſpirit which prevails over Europe; have been ſurpriſed to ſee them carry on a traffic with productions, that an Aſiatic ſtranger would deem entirely uſeleſs. It is a proverb in China, that an European ſuffers not even his ſpittle to be loſt; the maxim, however, is not ſufficiently ſtrong, ſince they ſell even their lies to a great advantage. Every nation drives a conſiderable trade in this commodity with their neighbours.

An Engliſh dealer in this way, for inſtance, has only to aſcend to his work-houſe, and manufacture a turbulent ſpeech averred to be ſpoken in the ſenate; or a report ſuppoſed to be dropt at court; a piece of ſcandal that ſtrikes at a popular Mandarine; or a ſecret treaty between two neighbouring powers. When finiſhed, theſe goods are baled up, and conſigned to a factor abroad, who ſends in return two battles, three ſieges, and a ſhrewd letter filled with daſhes——blanks and ſtars **** of great importance.

Thus you perceive, that a ſingle gazette is the joint manufacture of Europe; and he who would peruſe it with a philoſophical eye, might perceive in every paragraph ſomething characteriſtic of the nation

tion to whom it belongs. A map does not exhibit a more diſtinct view of the boundaries and ſituation of every country, than its news does a picture of the genius and the morals of its inhabitants. The ſuperſtition and erroneous delicacy of Italy, the formality of Spain, the cruelty of Portugal, the fears of Auſtria, the confidence of Pruſſia, the levity of France, the avarice of Holland, the pride of England, the abſurdity of Ireland, and the national partiality of Scotland, are all conſpicuous in every page.

But, perhaps, you may find more ſatisfaction in a real news-paper, than in my deſcription of one; I therefore ſend a ſpecimen, which may ſerve to exhibit the manner of their being written, and diſtinguiſh the characters of the various nations which are united in its compoſition.

NAPLES. We have lately dug up here a curious Etruſcan monument, broke in two in the raiſing. The characters are ſcarce viſible; but Nugoſi, the learned antiquary, ſuppoſes it to have been erected in honour of Picus, a Latin King, as one of the lines may be plainly diſtinguiſhed to begin with a P. It is hoped this diſcovery will produce ſome-

thing valuable, as the literati of our twelve academies are deeply engaged in the diſquiſition.

PISA. Since Father Fudgi, prior of St Gilbert's, has gone to reſide at Rome, no miracles have been performed at the ſhrine of St Gilbert; the devout begin to grow uneaſy, and ſome begin actually to fear that St Gilbert has forſaken them with the reverend father.

LUCCA. The adminiſtrators of our ſerene republic, have frequent conferences upon the part they ſhall take in the preſent commotions of Europe. Some are for ſending a body of their troops, conſiſting of one company of foot, and ſix horſemen, to make a diverſion in favour of the Empreſs queen; others are as ſtrenuous aſſerters of the Pruſſian intereſt: what turn theſe debates may take, time only can diſcover. However, certain it is, we ſhall be able to bring into the field at the opening of the next campaign, ſeventy-five armed men, a commander in chief, and two drummers of great experience.

SPAIN. Yeſterday the new king ſhewed himſelf to his ſubjects; and after having ſtaid half an hour in his balcony, retired to the royal apartment.

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The night concluded on this extraordinary occaſion, with illuminations and other demonſtrations of joy.

The queen is more beautiful than the riſing ſun, and reckoned one of the firſt wits in Europe: ſhe had a glorious opportunity of diſplaying the readineſs of her invention, and her ſkill in repartee, lately at court. The Duke of Lerma, coming up to her with a low bow and a ſmile, and preſenting a noſegay ſet with diamonds,—"Madam," cries he, "I am your moſt obedient humble ſervant." "Oh, Sir," replies the queen, without any prompter, or the leaſt heſitation, "I'm very proud of the very great honour you do me." Upon which ſhe made a low curtſey, and all the courtiers fell a laughing at the readineſs and the ſmartneſs of her reply.

Lisbon. Yeſterday we had an *auto da fe*, at which were burned three young women accuſed of hereſy, one of them of exquiſite beauty; two Jews, and an old woman, convicted of being a witch: One of the friars, who attended this laſt, reports, that he ſaw the devil fly out of her at the ſtake in the ſhape of a flame of fire. The populace behaved on this

this occaſion with great good humour, joy, and ſincere devotion.

Our merciful Sovereign has been for ſome time paſt recovered of his fright: though ſo attrocious an attempt deſerved to exterminate half the nation, yet he has been graciouſly pleaſed to ſpare the lives of his ſubjects, and not above five hundred have been broke upon the wheel, or otherwiſe executed, upon this horrid occaſion.

VIENNA. We have received certain advices, that a party of twenty thouſand Auſtrians having attacked a much ſuperior body of Pruſſians, put them all to flight, and took the reſt priſoners of war.

BERLIN. We have received certain advices, that a party of twenty thouſand Pruſſians, having attacked a much ſuperior body of Auſtrians, put them to flight, and took a great number of priſonners, with their military cheſt, cannon, and baggage.

Though we have not ſucceeded this campaign to our wiſhes; yet when we think of him who commands us, we reſt in ſecurity: while we ſleep, our king is watchful for our ſafety.

PARIS.

PARIS. We ſhall ſoon ſtrike a ſignal blow. We have ſeventeen flat-bottomed boats at Havre. The people are in excellent ſpirits, and our miniſters make no difficulty in raiſing the ſupplies.

We are all undone; the people are diſcontented to the laſt degree; the miniſters are obliged to have recourſe to the moſt rigorous methods to raiſe the expences of the war.

Our diſtreſſes are great; but Madam Pompadour continues to ſupply our king, who is now growing old, with a freſh lady every night. His health, thank heaven, is ſtill pretty well; nor is he in the leaſt unfit, as was reported, for any kind of royal exercitation. He was ſo affrighted at the affair of Damien, that his phyſicians were apprehenſive leaſt his reaſon ſhould ſuffer, but that wretch's tortures ſoon compoſed the kingly terrors of his breaſt.

ENGLAND. Wanted an uſher to an academy. *N. B.* He muſt be able to read, dreſs hair, and muſt have had the ſmall-pox.

DUBLIN. We hear that there is a benevolent ſubſcription on foot among the nobility and gentry of this kingdom, who are great patrons of merit,

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in order to aſſiſt Black and all Black in his conteſt with the Padderen mare.

We hear from Germany, that Prince Ferdinand has gained a complete victory, and taken twelve kettle-drums, five ſtandards, and four waggons of ammunition, priſoners of war.

EDINBURGH. We are poſitive when we ſay, that Saunders M'Gregor, who was lately executed for horſe-ſtealing, is not a Scotchman, but born in Carrickfergus. Farewel.

LETTER. VI.

FUM HOAM, *firſt Preſident of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, to* LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *the diſcontented wanderer; by the way of Moſcow.*

WHETHER ſporting on the flowery banks of the river Irtis, or ſcaling the ſteepy mountains of Douchenour: Whether traverſing the black deſarts of Kobi, or giving leſſons of politeneſs to the ſavage inhabitants of Europe. In whatever country, whatever climate, and whatever circumſtances, all hail!

May

May Tien, the univerſal ſoul, take you under his protection, and inſpire you with a ſuperior portion of himſelf.

How long, my friend, ſhall an enthuſiaſm for knowledge continue to obſtruct your happineſs, and tear you from all the connections that make life pleaſing? How long will you continue to rove from climate to climate, circled by thouſands, and yet without a friend, feeling all the inconveniencies of a crowd, and all the anxiety of being alone.

I know you will reply, that the refined pleaſure of growing every day wiſer, is a ſufficient recompence for every inconvenience. I know you will talk of the vulgar ſatisfaction of ſoliciting happineſs from ſenſual enjoyment only; and probably enlarge upon the exquiſite raptures of ſentimental bliſs. Yet, believe me, friend, you are deceived; all our pleaſures, though ſeemingly never ſo remote from ſenſe, derive their origin from ſome one of the ſenſes. The moſt exquiſite demonſtration in mathematics, or the moſt pleaſing diſquiſition in metaphyſics, if it does not ultimately tend to increaſe ſome ſenſual ſatisfaction, is delightful only to fools, or to men who have by long habit contracted a falſe idea of pleaſure; and he who ſeparates ſenſual and

ſentimental enjoyments, ſeeking happineſs from mind alone, is in fact as wretched as the naked inhabitant of the foreſt, who places all happineſs in he firſt, regardleſs of the latter. There are two extremes in this reſpect; the ſavage who ſwallows down the draught of pleaſure without ſtaying to reflect on his happineſs, and the ſage who paſſes the cup while he reflects on the conveniencies of drinking.

It is with an heart full of ſorrow, my dear Altangi, that I muſt inform you, that what the world calls happineſs, muſt now be yours no longer. Our great emperor's diſpleaſure at your leaving China, contrary to the rules of our government, and the immemorial cuſtom of the empire, has produced the moſt terrible effects. Your wife, daughter, and the reſt of your family, have been ſeized by his order, and appropriated to his uſe; all, except your ſon, are now the peculiar property of him who poſſeſſes all; him I have hidden from the officers employed for this purpoſe; and even at the hazard of my life I have concealed him. The youth ſeems obſtinately bent on finding you out, whereever you are; he is determined to face every danger that oppoſes his purſuit. Though yet but fifteen, all his father's virtues and obſtinacy ſparkle

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in his eyes, and mark him as one deſtined to no mediocrity of fortune.

You ſee, my deareſt friend, what imprudence has brought thee to; from opulence, a tender family, ſurrounding friends, and your maſter's eſteem, it has reduced thee to want, perſecution, and ſtill worſe, to our mighty monarch's diſpleaſure. Want of prudence is too frequently the want of virtue; nor is there upon earth a more powerful advocate for vice than poverty. As I ſhall endeavour to guard thee from the one, ſo guard thyſelf from the other; and ſtill think of me with affection and eſteem. Farewel.

LETTER VII.

From LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *to* FUM HOAM, *firſt Preſident of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

The Editor thinks proper to acquaint the reader, that the greateſt part of the following letter ſeems to him to be little more than a rhapſody of ſentences borrowed from Confucius, the Chineſe philoſopher.

A Wife, a daughter, carried into captivity to expiate my offence, a ſon ſcarce yet arrived at matu-

rity, reſolving to encounter every danger in the pious purſuit of one who has undone him, theſe indeed are circumſtances of diſtreſs; though my tears were more precious than the gem of Golconda, yet would they fall upon ſuch an occaſion.

But I ſubmit to the ſtroke of heaven, I hold the volume of Confucius in my hand, and as I read, grow humble, and patient, and wiſe. We ſhould feel ſorrow, ſays he, but not ſink under its oppreſſion: the heart of a wiſe man ſhould reſemble a mirror, which reflects every object without being ſullied by any. The wheel of fortune turns inceſſantly round, and who can ſay within himſelf, I ſhall to day be uppermoſt. We ſhould hold the immutable mean that lies between inſenſibility and anguiſh; our attempts ſhould be, not to extinguiſh nature, but to repreſs it; not to ſtand unmoved at diſtreſs, but endeavour to turn every diſaſter to our own advantage. Our greateſt glory is, not in never falling, but in riſing every time we fall.

I fancy myſelf at preſent, O thou reverend diſciple of Tao, more than a match for all that can happen: the chief buſineſs of my life has been to procure wiſdom, and the chief object of that wiſdom was to be happy. My attendance on your lectures,

lectures, my conferences with the miſſionaries of Europe, and all my ſubſequent adventures upon quitting China, were calculated to increaſe the ſphere of my happineſs, not my curioſity. Let European travellers croſs ſeas and deſarts, merely to meaſure the height of a mountain, to deſcribe the cataract of a river, or tell the commodities which every country may produce; merchants or geographers, perhaps, may find profit by ſuch diſcoveries, but what advantage can accrue to a philoſopher from ſuch accounts, who is deſirous of underſtanding the human heart, who ſeeks to know the *men* of every country, who deſires to diſcover thoſe differences which reſult from climate, religion, education, prejudice, and partiality.

I ſhould think my time very ill beſtowed, were the only fruits of my adventures to conſiſt in being able to tell, that a tradeſman of London lives in an houſe three times as high as that of our great emperor; that the ladies wear longer cloathes than the men; that the prieſts are dreſſed in colours which we are taught to deteſt; and that their ſoldiers wear ſcarlet, which is with us the ſymbol of peace and innocence. How many travellers are there, who confine their relations to ſuch minute and uſeleſs particulars: for one who enters into

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the genius of thoſe nations with whom he has converſed, who diſcloſes their morals, their opinions, the ideas which they entertain of religious worſhip, the intrigues of their miniſters, and their ſkill in ſciences; there are twenty, who only mention ſome idle particulars, which can be of no real uſe to a true philoſopher. All their remarks tend, neither to make themſelves nor others more happy; they no way contribute to controul their paſſions, to bear adverſity, to inſpire true virtue, or raiſe a deteſtation of vice.

Men may be very learned, and yet very miſerable; it is eaſy to be a deep geometrician, or a ſublime aſtronomer, but very difficult to be a good man; I eſteem, therefore, the traveller who inſtructs the heart, but deſpiſe him who only indulges the imagination: a man who leaves home to mend himſelf and others, is a philoſopher; but he, who goes from country to country, guided by the blind impulſe of curioſity, is only a vagabond. From Zerduſht down to him of Tyanea, I honour all thoſe great names who endeavoured to unite the world by their travels: ſuch men grew wiſer as well as better, the farther they departed from home, and ſeemed like rivers, whoſe ſtreams are not

not only increaſed, but refined, as they travel from their ſource.

For my own part, my greateſt glory is, that travelling has not more ſteeled my conſtitution againſt all the viciſſitudes of climate, and all the depreſſions of fatigue, than it has my mind againſt the accidents of fortune, or the acceſſes of deſpair. Farewel.

LETTER VIII.

From LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *to* FUM HOAM, *firſt Preſident of the Ceremonial Accademy at Pekin, in China.*

HOW inſupportable! oh thou poſſeſſor of heavenly wiſdom, would be this ſeparation, this immeaſurable diſtance from my friend, were I not able thus to delineate my heart upon paper, and to ſend thee daily a map of my mind.

I am every day better reconciled to the people among whom I reſide, and begin to fancy that in time I ſhall find them more opulent, more charitable,

table, and more hoſpitable than I at firſt imagined. I begin to learn ſomewhat of their manners and cuſtoms and to ſee reaſons for ſeveral deviations which they make from us, from whom all other nations derive their politeneſs as well as their original.

In ſpite of taſte, in ſpite of prejudice, I now begin to think their women tolerable; I can now look on a languiſhing blue eye without diſguſt, and pardon a ſet of teeth, even though whiter than ivory. I now begin to fancy there is no univerſal ſtandard for beauty. The truth is, the manners of the ladies in this city are ſo very open, and ſo vaſtly engaging, that I am inclined to paſs over the more glaring defects of their perſons, ſince compenſated by the more ſolid, yet latent beauties of the mind: what though they want black teeth, or are deprived of the allurements of feet no bigger than their thumbs, yet ſtill they have ſouls, my friend, ſuch ſouls, ſo free, ſo preſſing, ſo hoſpitable, and ſo engaging—I have received more invitations in the ſtreets of London from the ſex in one night, than I have met with at Pekin in twelve revolutions of the moon.

Every evening as I return home from my uſual ſolitary excurſions, I am met by ſeveral of thoſe well-

well-diſpoſed daughters of hoſpitality, at different times and in different ſtreets, richly dreſſed, and with minds not leſs noble than their appearance. You know that nature has indulged me with a perſon by no means agreeable; yet are they too generous to object to my homely appearance; they feel no repugnance at my broad face and flat noſe; they perceive me to be a ſtranger, and that alone is a ſufficient recommendation. They even ſeem to think it their duty to do the honours of the country, by every act of complaiſance in their power. One takes me under the arm, and in a manner forces me along; another catches me round the neck, and deſires to partake in this office of hoſpitality; while a third, kinder ſtill, invites me to refreſh my ſpirits with wine. Wine is in England reſerved only for the rich, yet here, even wine is given away to the ſtranger.

A few nights ago, one of thoſe generous creatures, dreſſed all in white, and flaunting like a meteor by my ſide, forcibly attended me home to my own apartment. She ſeemed charmed with the elegance of the furniture, and the convenience of my ſituation. And well indeed ſhe might, for I have hired an apartment for not leſs than two ſhillings of their money every week. But her ci-

vility did not reſt here; for at parting, being deſirous to know the hour, and perceiving my watch out of order, ſhe kindly took it to be repaired by a relation of her own, which you may imagine will ſave ſome expence, and ſhe aſſures me that it will coſt her nothing. I ſhall have it back in a few days when mended, and I am preparing a proper ſpeech expreſſive of my gratitude on the occaſion: "Celeſtial excellence," I intend to ſay, "happy I am in having found out, after many painful adventures, a land of innocence, and a people of humanity: I may rove into other climes, and converſe with nations yet unknown, but where ſhall I meet a ſoul of ſuch purity as that which reſides in thy breaſt! Sure thou haſt been nurtured by the bill of the Shin Shin, or ſucked the breaſt of the provident Gin Hiung. The melody of thy voice could rob the Chong Fou of her whelps, or inveigle the Boh that lives in the midſt of the waters. Thy ſervant ſhall ever retain a ſenſe of thy favours; and one day boaſt of thy virtue, ſincerity, and truth, among the daughters of China." Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

To the ſame.

I Have been deceived; ſhe whom I fancied a daughter of paradiſe, has proved to be one of the infamous diſciples of Han! I have loſt a trifle, I have gained the conſolation of having diſcovered a deceiver. I once more, therefore, relax into my former indifference with regard to the Engliſh ladies, they once more begin to appear diſagreeable in my eyes: Thus is my whole time paſſed in forming conſolations which the next minute's experience may probably deſtroy; the preſent moment becomes a comment on the paſt, and I improve rather in humility than wiſdom.

Their laws and religion forbid the Engliſh to keep more than one woman, I therefore concluded that proſtitutes were baniſhed from ſociety; I was deceived; every man here keeps as many wives as he can maintain; the laws are cemented with blood, praiſed and diſregarded. The very Chineſe, whoſe religion allows him two wives, takes not half the liberties of the Engliſh in this particular. Their laws may be compared to the books of the Sybils,

they are held in great veneration, but ſeldom read, or ſeldomer underſtood; even thoſe who pretend to be their guardians diſpute about the meaning of many of them, and confeſs their ignorance of others. The law therefore which commands them to have but one wife, is ſtrictly obſerved only by thoſe for whom one is more than ſufficient, or by ſuch as have not money to buy two. As for the reſt, they violate it publicly, and ſome glory in its violation. They ſeem to think, like the Perſians, that they give evident marks of manhood by increaſing their ſeraglio. A mandarine, therefore, here generally keeps four wives, a gentleman three, and a ſtage-player two. As for the magiſtrates, the country-juſtices, and ſquires, they are employed, firſt in debauching young virgins, and then puniſhing the tranſgreſſion.

From ſuch a picture you will be apt to conclude, that he who employs four ladies for his amuſement, has four times as much conſtitution to ſpare as he who is contented with one; that a mandarine is much cleverer than a gentleman, and a gentleman than a player; and yet it is quite the reverſe; a mandarine is frequently ſupported on ſpindle ſhanks, appears emaciated by luxury, and is obliged to have recourſe to variety, merely from the weakneſs, not

the

the rigour of his conſtitution, the number of his wives being the moſt equivocal ſymptom of his virility.

Beſide the country ſquire, there is alſo another ſet of men, whoſe whole employment conſiſts in corrupting beauty: theſe the ſilly part of the fair ſex call amiable; the more ſenſible part of them, however, give them the title of abominable. You will probably demand what are the talents of a man thus careſſed by the majority of the fair ſex? what talents, or what beauty is he poſſeſſed of, ſuperior to the reſt of his fellows? To anſwer you directly, he has neither talents, nor beauty, but then he is poſſeſſed of impudence and aſſiduity. With aſſiduity and impudence, men of all ages, and all figures may commence admirers. I have even been told of ſome who made profeſſions of expiring for love, when all the world could perceive they were going to die of old age: and what is more ſurpriſing ſtill, ſuch battered beaus are generally moſt infamouſly ſucceſsful.

A fellow of this kind employs three hours every morning in dreſſing his head, by which is underſtood only his hair.

He

He is a profeſſed admirer, not of any particular lady, but of the whole ſex.

He is to ſuppoſe every lady has caught cold every night, which gives him an opportunity of calling to ſee how ſhe does the next morning.

He is upon all occaſions to ſhew himſelf in very great pain for the ladies; if a lady drops even a pin, he is to fly in order to preſent it.

He never ſpeaks to a lady without advancing his mouth to her ear, by which he frequently addreſſes more ſenſes than one.

Upon proper occaſions he looks exceſſively tender. This is performed by laying his hand upon his heart, ſhutting his eyes, and ſhowing his teeth.

He is exceſſively fond of dancing a minuet with the ladies, by which is only meant walking round the floor eight or ten times with his hat on, affecting great gravity, and ſometimes looking tenderly on his partner.

He never affronts any man himſelf, and never reſents an affront from another.

He

He has an infinite variety of ſmall talk upon all occaſions, and laughs when he has nothing more to ſay.

Such is the killing creature who proſtrates himſelf to the ſex till he has undone them; all whoſe ſubmiſſions are the effects of deſign, and who to pleaſe the ladies almoſt becomes himſelf a lady.

LETTER X.

To the ſame.

I Have hitherto given you no account of my journey from China to Europe, of my travels through countries, where nature ſports in primeval rudeneſs, where ſhe pours forth her wonders in ſolitude; countries, from whence the rigorous climate, the ſweeping inundation, the drifted deſart, the howling foreſt, and mountains of immeaſurable height, baniſh the huſbandman, and ſpread extenſive deſolation; countries where the brown Tartar wanders for a precarious ſubſiſtence, with an heart that never felt pity, himſelf more hideous than the wilderneſs he makes.

You

You will eaſily conceive the fatigue of croſſing vaſt tracts of land, either deſolate, or ſtill more dangerous by its inhabitants. The retreat of men, who ſeem driven from ſociety, in order to make war upon all the human race; nominally profeſſing a ſubjection to Moſcovy or China, but without any reſemblance to the countries on which they depend.

After I had croſſed the great wall, the firſt objects that preſented were the remains of deſolated cities, and all the magnificence of venerable ruin. There were to be ſeen temples of beautiful ſtructure, ſtatues wrought by the hand of a maſter, and around a country of luxuriant plenty; but not one ſingle inhabitant to reap the bounties of nature. Theſe were proſpects that might humble the pride of kings, and repreſs human vanity. I aſked my guide the cauſe of ſuch deſolation. Theſe countries, ſays he, were once the dominions of a Tartar prince; and theſe ruins the ſeat of arts, elegance, and eaſe. This prince waged an unſucceſsful war with one of the Emperors of China; he was conquered, his cities plundered, and all his ſubjects carried into captivity. Such are the effects of the ambition of kings! Ten derviſes, ſays the Indian proverb, ſhall ſleep in peace upon a ſingle carpet,

while

while two kings ſhall quarrel, though they have kingdoms to divide them. Sure, my friend, the cruelty and the pride of man have made more deſarts than nature ever made! ſhe is kind, but man is ungrateful!

Proceeding in my journey through this penſive ſcene of deſolated beauty, in a few days I arrived among the Daures, a nation ſtill dependent on China. Xaizigar is their principal city, which, compared with thoſe of Europe, ſcarely deſerves the name. The governors and other officers, who are ſent yearly from Pekin, abuſe their authority, and often take the wives and daughters of the inhabitants to themſelves. The Daures, accuſtomed to baſe ſubmiſſion, feel no reſentment at thoſe injuries, or ſtifle what they feel. Cuſtom and neceſſity teach even barbarians the ſame art of diſſimulation that ambition and intrigue inſpire in the breaſts of the polite. Upon beholding ſuch unlicenſed ſtretches of power—"Alas!" thought I, "how little does our wiſe and good emperor know of thoſe intolerable exactions! theſe provinces are too diſtant for complaint, and too inſignificant to expect redreſs. The more diſtant the government, the honeſter ſhould be the governor to whom it is entruſted; for hope of impunity is a ſtrong inducement to violation."

The religion of the Daures is more abſurd than even that of the ſectaries of Fohi. How would you be ſurpriſed, O ſage diſciple and follower of Confucius! you who believe one eternal intelligent Cauſe of all, ſhould you be preſent at the barbarous ceremonies of this infatuated people! How would you deplore the blindneſs and folly of mankind! His boaſted reaſon ſeems only to light him aſtray, and brutal inſtinct more regularly points out the path to happineſs. Could you think it? they adore a wicked divinity; they fear him, and they worſhip him; they imagine him a malicious being, ready to injure and ready to be appeaſed. The men and women aſſemble at midnight in a hut, which ſerves for a temple. A prieſt ſtretches himſelf on the ground, and all the people pour forth the moſt horrid cries, while drums and timbrels ſwell the infernal concert. After this diſſonance, miſcalled muſic, has continued about two hours, the prieſt riſes from the ground, aſſumes an air of inſpiration, grows big with the inſpiring dæmon, and pretends to ſkill in futurity.

In every country, my friend, the bonzes, the brachmans, and the prieſts, deceive the people; all reformations begin from the laity; the prieſts point us out the way to heaven with their fingers,

but

but ſtand ſtill themſelves, nor ſeem to travel towards the country in view.

The cuſtoms of this people correſpond to their religion; they keep their dead for three days on the ſame bed where the perſon died; after which they bury him in a grave moderately deep, but with the head ſtill uncovered. Here for ſeveral days they preſent him with different ſorts of meats; which, when they perceive he does not conſume, they fill up the grave, and deſiſt from deſiring him to eat for the future. How, how can mankind be guilty of ſuch ſtrange abſurdity, to entreat a dead body, already putrid, to partake of the banquet! Where, I again repeat it, is human reaſon! not only ſome men, but whole nations, ſeem diveſted of its illumination. Here we obſerve a whole country adoring a divinity through fear, and attempting to feed the dead. Theſe are their moſt ſerious and religious occupations: Are theſe men rational, or are not the apes of Borneo more wiſe?

Certain I am, O thou inſtructor of my youth! that without philoſophers, without ſome few virtuous men, who ſeem to be of a different nature from the reſt of mankind, without ſuch as theſe, the worſhip of a wicked divinity would ſurely be eſta-

bliſhed over every part of the earth. Fear guides more to their duty than gratitude: for one man who is virtuous from the love of virtue, from the obligation which he thinks he lies under to the giver of all, there are ten thouſand who are good only from their apprehenſions of puniſhment. Could theſe laſt be perſuaded, as the Epicureans were, that heaven had no thunders in ſtore for the villain, they would no longer continue to acknowledge ſubordination, or thank that Being who gave them exiſtence. Adieu.

LETTER XI.

To the ſame.

FROM ſuch a picture of nature in primeval ſimplicity, tell me, my much reſpected friend, are you in love with fatigue and ſolitude? Do you ſigh for the ſevere frugality of the wandering Tartar, or regret being born amidſt the luxury and diſſimulation of the polite? Rather tell me, has not every kind of life vices peculiarly its own? Is it not a truth, that refined countries have more vices, but thoſe not ſo terrible; barbarous nations few, and

and they of the moſt hideous complexion? Perfidy and fraud are the vices of civilized nations, credulity and violence thoſe of the inhabitants of the deſart. Does the luxury of the one produce half the evils of the inhumanity of the other? Certainly thoſe philoſophers who declaim againſt luxury, have but little underſtood its benefits; they ſeem inſenſible that to luxury we owe not only the greateſt part of our knowledge, but even of our virtues.

It may ſound fine in the mouth of a declaimer, when he talks of ſubduing our appetites, of teaching every ſenſe to be content with a bare ſufficiency, and of ſupplying only the wants of nature; but is there not more ſatisfaction in indulging thoſe appetites, if with innocence and ſafety, than in reſtraining them? Am not I better pleaſed in enjoyment than in the ſullen ſatisfaction of thinking that I can live without enjoyment? The more various our artificial neceſſities, the wider is our circle of pleaſure; for all pleaſure conſiſts in obviating neceſſities as they riſe; luxury, therefore, as it increaſes our wants, increaſes our capacity for happineſs.

Examine the hiſtory of any country remarkable for opulence and wiſdom, you will find they would never

never have been wiſe, had they not been firſt luxurious; you will find poets, philoſophers, and even patriots, marching in luxury's train. The reaſon is obvious; we then only are curious after knowledge, when we find it connected with ſenſual happineſs. The ſenſes ever point out the way, and reflection comments upon the diſcovery. Inform a native of the deſart of Kobi, of the exact meaſure of the parallax of the moon, he finds no ſatisfaction at all in the information; he wonders how any could take ſuch pains, and lay out ſuch treaſures in order to ſolve ſo uſeleſs a difficulty; but connect it with his happineſs, by ſhewing that it improves navigation, that by ſuch an inveſtigation he may have a warmer coat, a better gun, or a finer knife, and he is inſtantly in raptures at ſo great an improvement. In ſhort, we only deſire to know what we deſire to poſſeſs; and whatever we may talk againſt it, luxury adds the ſpur to curioſity, and gives us a deſire of becoming more wiſe.

But not our knowledge only, but our virtues, are improved by luxury. Obſerve the brown ſavage of Thibet, to whom the fruits of the ſpreading pomegranate ſupply food, and its branches an habitation. Such a character has few vices I grant, but thoſe he has are of the moſt hideous nature; rapine

rapine and cruelty are ſcarce crimes in his eye; neither pity nor tenderneſs, which enoble every virtue, have any place in his heart; he hates his enemies, and kills thoſe he ſubdues. On the other hand, the polite Chineſe and civilized European, ſeem even to love their enemies. I have juſt now ſeen an inſtance, where the Engliſh have ſuccoured thoſe enemies whom their own countrymen have actually refuſed to relieve.

The greater the luxuries of every country, the more cloſely, politically ſpeaking, is that country united. Luxury is the child of ſociety alone, the luxurious man ſtands in need of a thouſand different artiſts to furniſh out his happineſs; it is more likely, therefore, that he ſhould be a good citizen who is connected by motives of ſelf-intereſt with ſo many, than the abſtemious man, who is united to none.

In whatſoever light, therefore, we conſider luxury, whether as employing a number of hands naturally too feeble for more laborious employment, as finding a variety of occupations for others who might be totally idle, or as furniſhing out new inlets to happineſs, without encroaching on mutual property; in whatever light we regard it,

we

we ſhall have reaſon to ſtand up in its defence, and the ſentiment of Confucius ſtill remains unſhaken, "That we ſhould enjoy as many of the luxuries of life as are conſiſtent with our own ſafety, and the proſperity of others; and that he who finds out a new pleaſure is one of the moſt uſeful members of ſociety."

LETTER XII.

To the ſame.

FROM the funeral ſolemnities of the Daures, who think themſelves the politeſt people in the world, I muſt make a tranſition to the funeral ſolemnities of the Engliſh, who think themſelves as polite as they. The numberleſs ceremonies which are uſed here when a perſon is ſick, appear to me ſo many evident marks of fear and apprehenſion. Aſk an Engliſhman, however, whether he is afraid of death, and he boldly anſwers in the negative; but obſerve his behaviour in circumſtances of approaching ſickneſs, and you will find his actions give his aſſertions the lie.

The

The Chineſe are very ſincere in this reſpect; they hate to die, and they confeſs their terrors: a great part of their life is ſpent in preparing things proper for their funeral; a poor artizan will ſpend half his income in providing himſelf a tomb twenty years before he wants it; and denies himſelf the neceſſaries of life, that he may be amply provided for when he ſhall want them no more.

But people of diſtinction in England really deſerve pity, for they die in circumſtances of the moſt extreme diſtreſs. It is an eſtabliſhed rule, never to let a man know that he is dying: phyſicians are ſent for, the clergy are called, and every thing paſſes in ſilent ſolemnity round the ſick-bed; the patient is in agonies, looks round for pity, yet not a ſingle creature will ſay that he is dying. If he is poſſeſſed of fortune, his relations intreat him to make his will, as it may reſtore the tranquillity of his mind. He is deſired to undergo the rites of the church, for decency requires it. His friends take their leave, only becauſe they don't care to ſee him in pain. In ſhort, an hundred ſtratagems are uſed to make him do what he might have been induced to perform only by being told——"Sir, you are paſt all hopes, and had as good think decently of dying."

Beſides all this, the chamber is darkened, the whole houſe echoes to the cries of the wife, the lamentations of the children, the grief of the ſervants, and the ſighs of friends. The bed is ſurrounded with prieſts and doctors in black, and only flambeaux emit a yellow gloom. Where is the man, how intrepid ſoever, that would not ſhrink at ſuch a hideous ſolemnity? For fear of affrighting their expiring friends, the Engliſh practiſe all that can fill them with terror. Strange effect of human prejudice, thus to torture merely from miſtaken tenderneſs!

You ſee, my friend, what contradictions there are in the tempers of thoſe iſlanders; when prompted by ambition, revenge, or diſappointment, they meet death with the utmoſt reſolution; the very man who in his bed would have trembled at the aſpect of a doctor, ſhall go with intrepidity to attack a baſtion, or deliberately nooſe himſelf up in his garters.

The paſſion of the Europeans for magnificent interments is equally ſtrong with that of the Chineſe. When a tradeſman dies, his frightful face is painted up by an undertaker, and placed in a proper ſituation to receive company; this is called lying in ſtate.

ſtate. To this diſagreeable ſpectacle all the idlers in town flock, and learn to loathe the wretched dead, whom they deſpiſed when living. In this manner you ſee ſome who would have refuſed a ſhilling to ſave the life of their deareſt friend, beſtow thouſands on adorning their putrid corpſe. I have been told of a fellow, who, grown rich by the price of blood, left it in his will that he ſhould lie in ſtate, and thus unknowingly gibbeted himſelf into infamy, when he might have otherwiſe quietly retired into oblivion.

When the perſon is buried, the next care is to make his epitaph; they are generally reckoned beſt which flatter moſt; ſuch relations therefore as have received moſt benefits from the defunct, diſcharge this friendly office; and generally flatter in proportion to their joy. When we read theſe monumental hiſtories of the dead, it may be juſtly ſaid, that all men are equal in the duſt; for they all appear equally remarkable for being the moſt ſincere Chriſtians, the moſt benevolent neighbours, and the honeſteſt men of their time. To go through an European cemetry, one would be apt to wonder how mankind could have ſo baſely degenerated from ſuch excellent anceſtors; every tomb pretends to claim your reverence and regret; ſome are praiſed

for piety in thoſe inſcriptions who never entered the temple until they were dead; ſome are praiſed for being excellent poets, who were never mentioned, except for their dulneſs, when living; others for ſublime orators, who were never noted except for their impudence; and others ſtill for military atchievements, who were never in any other ſkirmiſhes but with the watch. Some even make epitaphs for themſelves, and beſpeak the reader's good-will. It were indeed to be wiſhed, that every man would early learn, in this manner, to make his own; that he would draw it up in terms as flattering as poſſible; and that he would make it the employment of his life to deſerve it!

I have not yet been in a place called Weſtminſter Abbey, but ſoon intend to viſit it. There I am told I ſhall ſee juſtice done to deceaſed merit; none, I am told, are permitted to be buried there but ſuch as have adorned as well as improved mankind. There no intruders, by the influence of friends or fortune, preſume to mix their unhallowed aſhes with philoſophers, heroes, and poets. Nothing but true merit has a place in that awful ſanctuary: the guardianſhip of the tombs is committed to ſeveral reverend prieſts, who are never guilty for a ſuperior reward of taking down the

names

names of good men, to make room for others of equivocal character, nor ever profane the ſacred walls with pageants, that poſterity cannot know, or ſhall bluſh to own.

I always was of opinion, that ſepulchral honours of this kind ſhould be conſidered as a national concern, and not truſted to the care of the prieſts of any country, how reſpectable ſoever; but from the conduct of the reverend perſonages, whoſe diſintereſted patriotiſm I ſhall ſhortly be able to diſcover, I am taught to retract my former ſentiments. It is true, the Spartans and the Perſians made a fine political uſe of ſepulchral vanity; they permitted none to be thus interred, who had not fallen in the vindication of their country; a monument thus became a real mark of diſtinction, it nerved the hero's arm with tenfold vigour; and he fought without fear, who only fought for a grave. Farewel.

LETTER XIII.

From the ſame.

I Am juſt returned from Weſtminſter Abbey, the place of ſepulture for the philoſophers, heroes, and

and kings of England. What a gloom do monumental inſcriptions, and all the venerable remains of deceaſed merit inſpire! Imagine a temple marked with the hand of antiquity, ſolemn as religious awe, adorned with all the magnificence of barbarous profuſion, dim windows, fretted pillars, long colonades, and dark ceilings. Think, then, what were my ſenſations at being introduced to ſuch a ſcene! I ſtood in the midſt of the temple, and threw my eyes round on the walls filled with the ſtatues, the inſcriptions, and the monuments of the dead.

"Alas!" I ſaid to myſelf, "how does pride attend the puny child of duſt even to the grave! Even humble as I am, I poſſeſs more conſequence in the preſent ſcene than the greateſt hero of them all; they have toiled for an hour to gain a tranſient immortallity, and are at length retired to the grave, where they have no attendant but the worm, none to flatter but the epitaph."

As I was indulging ſuch reflections, a gentleman, dreſſed in black, perceiving me to be a ſtranger, came up, entered into converſation, and politely offered to be my inſtructor and guide through the temple. "If any monument," ſaid he, "ſhould particularly excite your curioſity, I ſhall endeavour to ſatisfy

ſatisfy your demands." I accepted, with thanks, the gentleman's offer; adding, that I was come to obſerve the policy, the wiſdom, and the juſtice of the Engliſh, in conferring rewards upon deceaſed merit. "If adulation like this," continued I, "be properly conducted, as it can no wiſe injure thoſe who are flattered, ſo it may be a glorious incentive to thoſe who are now capable of enjoying it. It is the duty of every good government to turn this monumental pride to its own advantage, to become ſtrong in the aggregate from the weakneſs of the individual. If none but the truly great have a place in this awful repoſitory, a temple like this will give the fineſt leſſons of morality, and be a ſtrong incentive to true ambition. I am told, that none have a place here but characters of the moſt diſtinguiſhed merit." The man in black ſeemed impatient at my obſervations; ſo I diſcontinued my remarks, and we walked on together to take a view of every particular monument in order as it lay.

As the eye is naturally caught by the fineſt objects, I could not avoid being particularly curious about one monument which appeared more beautiful than the reſt; "that," ſaid I to my guide, "I take to be the tomb of ſome very great man. By the peculiar excellence of the workmanſhip, and the magnificence

magnificence of the deſign, this muſt be a trophy raiſed to the memory of ſome king who has ſaved his country from ruin; or law-giver, who has reduced his fellow-citizens from anarchy into juſt ſubjection"—"It is not requiſite," replied my companion, ſmiling, "to have ſuch qualifications in order to have a very fine monument here. More humble abilities will ſuffice."—"What, I ſuppoſe, then, the gaining two or three battles, or the taking half a ſcore towns, is thought a ſufficient qualification?"—"Gaining battles or taking towns," replied the man in black, "may be of ſervice; but a gentleman may have a very fine monument here without ever ſeeing a battle or a ſiege."—"This then is the monument of ſome poet, I preſume; of one whoſe wit has gained him immortality?"——"No, Sir," replied my guide, "the gentleman who lies here never made verſes; and as for wit, he deſpiſed it in others, becauſe he had none himſelf."—"Pray tell me then in a word," ſaid I, peeviſhly, "what is the great man who lies here particularly remarkable for?"—"Remarkable, Sir!" ſaid my companion; "why, Sir, the gentleman that lies here is remarkable, very remarkable——for a tomb in Weſtminſter Abbey."—"But, head of my anceſtors! how has he got here? I fancy he could never bribe the guardians of the temple to give him a place: Should

he

he not be aſhamed to be ſeen among company, where even moderate merit would look like infamy?"—"I ſuppoſe," replied the man in black, "the gentleman was rich, and his friends, as is uſual in ſuch a caſe, told him he was great. He readily believed them; the guardians of the temple, as they got by the ſelf-deluſion, were ready to believe him too; ſo he paid his money for a fine monument; and the workman, as you ſee, has made him one of the moſt beautiful. Think not, however, that this gentleman is ſingular in his deſire of being buried among the great; there are ſeveral others in the temple, who, hated and ſhunned by the great while alive, have come here, fully reſolved to keep them company now they are dead."

As we walked along to a particular part of the temple—"there," ſays the gentleman, pointing with his finger, "that is the poets corner; there you ſee the monuments of Shakeſpear, and Milton, and Prior, and Drayton."—"Drayton," I replied, "I never heard of him before; but I have been told of one Pope, is he there?"—"It is time enough," replied my guide, "theſe hundred years, he is not long dead, people have not done hating him yet."—"Strange!" cried I, can any be found to hate a man, whoſe life was wholly ſpent in entertain-

ing and inſtructing his fellow-creatures?"—"Yes," ſays my guide; "they hate him for that very reaſon. There are a ſet of men, called anſwerers of books, who take upon them to watch the republic of letters, and diſtribute reputation by the ſheet; they ſomewhat reſemble the eunuchs in a ſeraglio, who are incapable of giving pleaſure themſelves, and hinder thoſe that would. Theſe anſwerers have no other employment but to cry out Dunce, and Scribler; to praiſe the dead, and revile the living; to grant a man of confeſſed abilities ſome ſmall ſhare of merit, to applaud twenty blockheads in order to gain the reputation of candour, and to revile the moral character of the man whoſe writings they cannot injure. Such wretches are kept in pay by ſome mercenary bookſeller, or more frequently, the bookſeller himſelf takes this dirty work off their hands, as all that is required is to be very abuſive and very dull; every poet of any genius is ſure to find ſuch enemies; he feels, though he ſeems to deſpiſe their malice; they make him miſerable here, and in the purſuit of empty fame, at laſt he gains ſolid anxiety."

"Has this been the caſe with every poet I ſee here?" cried I, "Yes, with every mother's ſon of them," replied he, "except he happened to be

born a mandarine. If he has much money, he may buy reputation from your book-anſwerers, as well as a monument from the guardians of the temple."

"But are there not ſome men of diſtinguiſhed taſte, as in China, who are willing to patronize men of merit, and ſoften the rancour of malevolent dulneſs?"

"I own there are many," replied the man in black; "but, alas! Sir, the book-anſwerers croud about them, and call themſelves the writers of books; and the patron is too indolent to diſtinguiſh: thus poets are kept at a diſtance, while their enemies eat up all their rewards at the mandarine's table."

Leaving this part of the temple, we made up to an iron gate, through which my companion told me we were to paſs, in order to ſee the monuments of the kings. Accordingly I marched up without further ceremony, and was going to enter, when a perſon who held the gate in his hand told me I muſt pay firſt. I was ſurpriſed at ſuch a demand; and aſked the man whether the people of England kept a *ſhow?* Whether the paltry ſum he demand-

ed was not a national reproach? Whether it was not more to the honour of the country to let their magnificence or their antiquities be openly ſeen, than thus meanly to tax a curioſity which tended to their own honour? "As for your queſtions," replied the gate-keeper, "to be ſure they may be very right, becauſe I don't underſtand them; but as for that there three-pence, I farm it from one, who rents it from another, who hires it from a third, who leaſes it from the guardians of the temple, and we all muſt live." I expected, upon paying here, to ſee ſomething extraordinary, ſince what I have ſeen for nothing filled me with ſo much ſurpriſe; but in this I was diſappointed; there was little more within than black coffins, ruſty armour, tattered ſtandards, and ſome few ſlovenly figures in wax. I was ſorry I had paid, but I comforted myſelf by conſidering it would be my laſt payment. A perſon attended us, who without once bluſhing told an hundred lies; he talked of a lady who died by pricking her finger, of a king with a golden head and twenty ſuch pieces of abſurdity. "Look ye there, gentleman," ſays he, pointing to an old oak chair, "there's a curioſity for ye! in that chair the kings of England were crowned; you ſee alſo a ſtone underneath, and that ſtone is Jacob's pillow." I could ſee no curioſity either in the

the oak chair or the ſtone; could I, indeed, behold one of the old kings of England ſeated in this, or Jacob's head laid upon the other, there might be ſomething curious in the ſight; but, in the preſent caſe, there was no more reaſon for my ſurpriſe than if I ſhould pick a ſtone from their ſtreets, and call it a curioſity, merely becauſe one of their kings happened to tread upon it as he paſſed in a proceſſion.

From hence our conductor led us through ſeveral dark walks and winding ways, uttering lies, talking to himſelf, and flouriſhing a wand which he held in his hand. He reminded me of the black magicians of Kobi. After we had been almoſt fatigued with a variety of objects, he, at laſt deſired me to conſider attentively a certain ſuit of armour, which ſeemed to ſhew nothing remarkable. "This armour," ſaid he, "belonged to General Monk." —"Very ſurpriſing, that a general ſhould wear armour!"——"And pray," added he, "obſerve this cap, this is general Monk's cap."—"Very ſtrange, indeed! very ſtrange, that a general ſhould have a cap alſo! Pray, friend, what might this cap have coſt originally?"—"That, Sir," ſays he, "I don't know; but this cap is all the wages I have for my trouble."—"A very ſmall recompence, truly!"

truly!" ſaid I. "Not ſo very ſmall," replied he, "for every gentleman puts ſome money into it, and I ſpend the money."—"What, more money! ſtill more money!"—"Every gentleman gives ſomething, Sir,"—"I'll give thee nothing," returned I; "the guardians of the temple ſhould pay you your wages, friend, and not permit you to ſqueeze thus from every ſpectator. When we pay our money at the door to ſee a ſhew, we never give more as we are going out. Sure the guardians of the temple can never think they get enough! Shew me the gate; if I ſtay longer, I may probably meet with more of thoſe eccleſiaſtical beggars."

Thus leaving the temple precipitately, I returned to my lodgings, in order to ruminate over what was great, and to deſpiſe what was mean in the occurrences of the day.

LETTER XIV.

From the ſame.

I Was ſome days ago agreeably ſurpriſed by a meſſage from a lady of diſtinction, who ſent me word,

that ſhe moſt paſſionately deſired the pleaſure of my acquaintance; and with the utmoſt impatience, expected an interview. I will not deny, my dear Fum Hoam, but that my vanity was raiſed at ſuch an invitation; I flattered myſelf that ſhe had ſeen me in ſome public place, and, had conceived an affection for my perſon, which thus induced her to deviate from the uſual decorums of the ſex. My imagination painted her in all the bloom of youth and beauty. I fancied her attended by the loves and graces, and I ſet out with the moſt pleaſing expectations of ſeeing the conqueſt I had made.

When I was introduced into her apartment, my expectations were quickly at an end; I perceived a little ſhrivelled figure indolently reclined on a ſofa, who nodded by way of approbation at my approach. This, as I was afterwards informed, was the lady herſelf, a woman equally diſtinguiſhed for rank, politeneſs, taſte, and underſtanding. As I was dreſſed after the faſhion of Europe, ſhe had taken me for an Engliſhman, and conſequently ſaluted me in her ordinary manner; but when the footman informed her Grace that I was the gentleman from China, ſhe inſtantly lifted herſelf from the couch, while her eyes ſparkled with unuſual vivacity. "Bleſs me! can this be the gentleman that

was

was born ſo far from home? What an unuſual ſhare of *ſomethingneſs* in his whole appearance! Lord, how I am charmed with the outlandiſh cut of his face! how bewitching the exotic breadth of his forehead! I would give the world to ſee him in his own country dreſs. Pray turn about, Sir, and let me ſee you behind. There! there's a travelled air for you! You that attend there, bring up a plate of beef cut into ſmall pieces; I have a violent paſſion to ſee him eat. Pray, Sir, have you got your chop-ſticks about you? It will be ſo pretty to ſee the meat carried to the mouth with a jerk. Pray ſpeak a little Chineſe: I have learned ſome of the language myſelf. Lord! have you nothing pretty from China about you; ſomething that one does not know what to do with? I have got twenty things from China that are of no uſe in the world. Look at thoſe jars, they are of the right pea green: theſe are the furniture."—"Dear Madam," ſaid I, "theſe though they may appear fine in your eyes, are but paltry to a Chineſe; but, as they are uſeful utenſils, it is proper they ſhould have a place in every apartment."—"Uſeful! Sir," replied the lady; "ſure you miſtake, they are of no uſe in the world."—"What! are they not filled with an infuſion of tea as in China?" replied I. "Quite empty and uſeleſs, upon my honour, Sir."—

"Then

"Then they are the moſt cumbrous and clumſy furniture in the world, as nothing is truly elegant but what unites uſe with beauty."—"I proteſt," ſays the lady, "I ſhall begin to ſuſpect thee of being an actual barbarian. I ſuppoſe you hold my two beautiful pagods in contempt?"—"What!" cried I, "has Fohi ſpread his groſs ſuperſtitions here alſo? Pagods of all kinds are my averſion."—"A Chineſe, a traveller, and want taſte! it ſurpriſes me. Pray, Sir, examine the beauties of that Chineſe temple which you ſee at the end of the garden. Is there any thing in China more beautiful?"—"Where I ſtand, I ſee nothing, Madam, at the end of the garden, that may not as well be called an Egyptian pyramid as a Chineſe temple; for that little building in view is as like the one as t'other."—"What! Sir, is not that a Chineſe temple? you muſt ſurely be miſtaken. Mr Freeze, who deſigned it, calls it one, and nobody diſputes his pretenſions to taſte." I now found it vain to contradict the lady in any thing ſhe thought fit to advance; ſo was reſolved rather to act the diſciple than the inſtructor. She took me through ſeveral rooms all furniſhed, as ſhe told me, in the Chineſe manner; ſprawling dragons, ſquatting pagods, and clumſy mandarines, were ſtuck upon every ſhelf: In turning round

one muſt have uſed caution not to demoliſh a part of the precarious furniture.

"In a houſe like this," thought I, "one muſt live continually upon the watch; the inhabitant muſt reſemble a knight in an enchanted caſtle, who expects to meet an adventure at every turning.—But, madam," ſaid I, "do no accidents ever happen to all this finery?"—"Man, Sir," replied the lady, "is born to misfortunes, and 'tis but fit I ſhould have a ſhare. Three weeks ago, a careleſs ſervant ſnapped off the head of a favourite mandarine: I had ſcarce done grieving for that, when a monkey broke a beautiful jar; this I took the more to heart, as the injury was done me by a friend: however, I ſurvived the calamity; when yeſterday craſh went half a dozen dragons upon the marble hearth-ſtone; and yet I live; I ſurvive it all: you can't conceive what comfort I find under afflictions from philoſophy. There is Seneca, and Bolingbroke, and ſome others, who guide me through life, and teach me to ſupport its calamities." I could not but ſmile at a woman who makes her own misfortunes, and then deplores the miſeries of her ſituation. Wherefore, tired of acting with diſſimulation, and willing to indulge my meditations in ſolitude, I took leave juſt as the

ſervant

ſervant was bringing in a plate of beef, purſuant to the directions of his miſtreſs. Adieu.

LETTER XV.

From the ſame.

THE better ſort here pretend to the utmoſt compaſſion for animals of every kind. To hear them ſpeak, a ſtranger would be apt to imagine they could hardly hurt the gnat that ſtung them; they ſeem ſo tender, and ſo full of pity, that one would take them for the harmleſs friends of the whole creation; the protectors of the meaneſt inſect or reptile that was privileged with exiſtence. And yet, would you believe it? I have ſeen the very men who have thus boaſted of their tenderneſs, at the ſame time devouring the fleſh of ſix different animals toſſed up in a fricaſſee. Strange contrariety of conduct! they pity and they eat the objects of their compaſſion. The lion roars with terror over its captive; the tyger ſends forth its hideous ſhriek to intimidate its prey; no creature ſhews any fondneſs for its ſhort lived priſoner, except a man and a cat.

Man was born to live with innocence and ſimplicity, but he has deviated from nature; he was born to ſhare the bounties of heaven, but he has monopolized them; he was born to govern the brute creation, but he is become their tyrant. If an epicure now ſhall happen to ſurfeit on his laſt night's feaſt, twenty animals the next day are to undergo the moſt exquiſite tortures in order to provoke his appetite to another guilty meal. Hail, O ye ſimple, honeſt bramins of the eaſt! ye inoffenſive friends of all that were born to happineſs as well as you! you never ſought a ſhort lived pleaſure from the miſeries of other creatures. You never ſtudied the tormenting arts of ingenious refinement; you never ſurfeited upon a guilty meal. How much more purified and refined are all your ſenſations than ours: you diſtinguiſh every element with the utmoſt preciſion; a ſtream untaſted before is new luxury, a change of air is a new banquet, too refined for weſtern imaginations to conceive.

Though the Europeans do not hold the tranſmigration of ſouls, yet one of their doctors has, with great force of argument, and great plauſibility of reaſoning, endeavoured to prove that the bodies of animals are the habitations of dæmons and wicked ſpirits, which are obliged to reſide in theſe priſons till

till the reſurrection pronounces their everlaſting puniſhment; but are previouſly condemned to ſuffer all the pains and hardſhips inflicted upon them by man, or by each other here. If this be the caſe, it may frequently happen, that while we whip pigs to death, or boil live lobſters, we are putting ſome old acquaintance, ſome near relation, to excruciating tortures, and are ſerving him up to the very ſame table where he was once the moſt welcome companion.

'Kabul,' ſays the Zendaveſta, 'was born on the ruſhy banks of the river Mawra; his poſſeſſions were great, and his luxuries kept pace with the affluence of his fortune; he hated the harmleſs bramins, and deſpiſed their holy religion; every day his table was decked out with the fleſh of an hundred different animals, and his cooks had an hundred different ways of dreſſing it, to ſolicit even ſatiety.

'Notwithſtanding all his eating, he did not arrive at old age; he died of a ſurfeit, cauſed by intemperance: upon this, his ſoul was carried off, in order to take its trial before a ſelect aſſembly of the ſouls of thoſe animals which his gluttony had cauſed to be ſlain, and who were now appointed his judges.

'He

'He trembled before a tribunal, to every member of which he had formerly acted as an unmerciful tyrant: he ſought for pity, but found none diſpoſed to grant it. "Does he not remember," cries the angry boar, "to what agonies I was put, not to ſatisfy his hunger, but his vanity? I was firſt hunted to death, and my fleſh ſcarce thought worthy of coming once to his table. Were my advice followed, he ſhould do penance in the ſhape of an hog, which in life he moſt reſembled."

"I am rather," cries a ſheep upon the bench, "for having him ſuffer under the appearance of a lamb; we may then ſend him through four or five tranſmigrations in the ſpace of a month."—"Were my voice of any weight in the aſſembly," cries a calf, "he ſhould rather aſſume ſuch a form as mine: I was bled every day, in order to make my fleſh white, and at laſt killed without mercy."—"Would it not be wiſer," cries a hen, "to cram him in the ſhape of a fowl, and then ſmother him in his own blood as I was ſerved?" The majority of the aſſembly were pleaſed with this puniſhment, and were going to condemn him without further delay, when the ox roſe up to give his opinion: "I am informed," ſays this counſellor, "that the priſoner at the bar has left a wife with child

child behind him. By my knowledge in divination, I foreſee that this child will be a ſon, decrepid, feeble, ſickly; a plague to himſelf and all about him. What ſay you, then, my companions, if we condemn the father to animate the body of his own ſon; and by this means make him feel in himſelf thoſe miſeries his intemperance muſt otherwiſe have entailed upon his poſterity?" The whole court applauded the ingenuity of his torture; they thanked him for his advice. Kabul was driven once more to reviſit the earth; and his ſoul, in the body of his own ſon, paſſed a period of thirty years, loaded with miſery, anxiety, and diſeaſe.'

LETTER XVI.

From the ſame.

I Know not whether I am more obliged to the Chineſe miſſionaries for the inſtruction I have received from them, or prejudiced by the falſehoods they have made me believe. By them I was told that the Pope was univerſally allowed to be a man, and placed at the head of the church; in England, however, they plainly prove him to be an whore in man's cloaths, and often burn him in effigy as an impoſtor.

impoſtor. A thouſand books have been written on either ſide of the queſtion; prieſts are eternally diſputing againſt each other; and thoſe mouths that want argument are filled with abuſe. Which party muſt I believe; or ſhall I give credit to neither? When I ſurvey the abſurdities and falſehoods with which the books of the Europeans are filled, I thank heaven for having been born in China, and that I have ſagacity enough to detect impoſture.

The Europeans reproach us with falſe hiſtory and fabulous chronology; how ſhould they bluſh to ſee their own books, many of which are written by the doctors of their religion, filled with the moſt monſtrous fables, and atteſted with the utmoſt ſolemnity. The bounds of a letter do not permit me to mention all the abſurdities of this kind, which in my reading I have met with. I ſhall confine myſelf to the accounts which ſome of their lettered men give of the perſons of ſome of the inhabitants on our globe. And not ſatisfied with the moſt ſolemn aſſeverations, they ſometimes pretend to have been eye-witneſſes of what they deſcribe.

A Chriſtian doctor, in one of his principal performances*, ſays, that it was not impoſſible for a whole

* Auguſtin. de Civit. Dei, lib. xvi. p. 422.

whole nation to have but one eye in the middle of the fore-head. He is not ſatisfied with leaving it in doubt; but in another work * aſſures us, that the fact was certain, and that he himſelf was an eye-witneſs of it. "When," ſays he, "I took a journey into Ethiopia in company with ſeveral other ſervants of Chriſt, in order to preach the goſpel there; I beheld in the ſouthern provinces of the country a nation which had only one eye in the midſt of their foreheads."

You will, no doubt, be ſurpriſed, Reverend Fum, with this author's effrontery; but, alas! he is not alone in this ſtory; he has only borrowed it from ſeveral others who wrote before him. Solinus creates another nation of Cyclops, the Arimaſpians who inhabit thoſe countries that border on the Caſpian ſea. This author goes on to tell us of a people of India, who have but one leg and one eye, and yet are extremely active, run with great ſwiftneſs, and live by hunting. Theſe people we ſcarce know how to pity or admire; but the men whom Pliny calls Cynamolci, who have got the heads of dogs, really deſerve our compaſſion. Inſtead of language they expreſs their ſentiments by barking. Solinus confirms what Pliny mentions; and Simon

* Id. ad fratres in Eremo, Serm. xxxvii.

Mayole, a French biſhop, talks of them as of particular and familiar acquaintances.—"After paſſing the deſarts of Egypt," ſays he, "we meet with the Kunokephaloi, who inhabit thoſe regions that border on Ethiopia; they live by hunting; they cannot ſpeak, but whiſtle; their chins reſemble a ſerpent's head; their hands are armed with long ſharp claws; their breaſt reſembles that of a greyhound; and they excel in ſwiftneſs and agility." Would you think it, my friend, that theſe odd kind of people are, notwithſtanding their figure, exceſſively delicate? not even an alderman's wife, or Chineſe mandarine, can excel them in this particular. "Theſe people," continues our faithful biſhop, "never refuſe wine; love roaſt and boiled meat; they are particularly curious in having their meat well dreſſed, and ſpurn at it if in the leaſt tainted. When the Ptolemies reigned in Egypt," ſays he, a little further on, "thoſe men with dogs heads taught Grammar and Muſic." For men who had no voices to teach muſic, and who could not ſpeak to teach grammar, is, I confeſs, a little extraordinary. Did ever the diſciples of Fohi broach any thing more ridiculous?

Hitherto we have ſeen men with heads ſtrangely deformed, and with dogs heads; but what would you ſay if you heard of men without any heads at all?

Pomponius

Pomponius Mela, Solinus, and Aulus Gellius, deſcribe them to our hand.—"The Blemiæ have a noſe, eyes, and mouth on their breaſts; or, as others will have it, placed on their ſhoulders."

One would think that theſe authors had an antipathy to the human form, and were reſolved to make a new figure of their own: but let us do them juſtice; though they ſometimes deprive us of a leg an arm, an head, or ſome ſuch trifling part of the body, they often as liberally beſtow upon us ſomething that we wanted before. Simon Mayolo ſeems our particular friend in this reſpect: if he has denied heads to one part of mankind, he has given tails to another. He deſcribes many of the Engliſh of his time, which is not more than an hundred years ago, as having tails. His own words are as follow: "In England there are ſome families which have tails, as a puniſhment for deriding an Auguſtin Friar ſent by St Gregory, and who preached in Dorſetſhire. They ſewed the tails of different animals to his cloaths; but ſoon they found thoſe tails entailed on them and their poſterity for ever." It is certain that the author had ſome ground for this deſcription; many of the Engliſh wear tails to their wigs to this very day, as a mark, I ſuppoſe, of the antiquity of their families, and perhaps as a

ſymbol of thoſe tails with which they were formerly diſtinguiſhed by nature.

You ſee, my friend, there is nothing ſo ridiculous that has not at ſome time been ſaid by ſome philoſopher. The writers of books in Europe ſeem to think themſelves authoriſed to ſay what they pleaſe; and an ingenious philoſopher among them * has openly aſſerted, that he would undertake to perſuade the whole republic of readers to believe that the ſun was neither the cauſe of light nor heat; if he could only get ſix philoſophers on his ſide. Farewel.

LETTER XVII.

From the ſame.

WERE an Aſiatic politician to read the treaties of peace and friendſhip that have been annually making for more than an hundred years among the inhabitants of Europe, he would probably be ſurpriſed how it ſhould ever happen that Chriſtian princes could quarrel among each other. Their compacts

* Fontenelle.

compacts for peace are drawn up with the utmoſt preciſion, and ratified with the greateſt ſolemnity; to theſe each party promiſes a ſincere and inviolable obedience, and all wears the appearance of open friendſhip and unreſerved reconciliation.

Yet, notwithſtanding thoſe treaties, the people of Europe are almoſt continually at war. There is nothing more eaſy than to break a treaty ratified in all the uſual forms, and yet neither party be the aggreſſor. One ſide, for inſtance, breaks a trifling article by miſtake; the oppoſite party upon this makes a ſmall but premeditated repriſal; this brings on a return of greater from the other; both ſides complain of injuries and infractions; war is declared; they beat, are beaten; ſome two or three hundred thouſand men are killed; they grow tired, leave off juſt where they began; and ſo ſit coolly down to make new treaties.

The Engliſh and French ſeem to place themſelves foremoſt among the champion ſtates of Europe. Though parted by a narrow ſea, yet are they entirely of oppoſite characters; and from their vicinity are taught to fear and admire each other. They are at preſent engaged in a very deſtructive war, have already ſpilled much blood, are exceſſively

ſively irritated; and all upon account of one ſide's deſiring to wear greater quantities of furs than the other.

The pretext of the war is about ſome lands a thouſand leagues off; a country cold, deſolate, and hideous; a country belonging to a people who were in poſſeſſion for time immemorial. The ſavages of Canada claim a property in the country in diſpute; they have all the pretenſions which long poſſeſſion can confer. Here they had reigned for ages without rivals in dominion; and knew no enemies but the prowling bear or inſidious tyger; their native foreſts produced all the neceſſaries of life, and they found ample luxury in the enjoyment. In this manner they might have continued to live to eternity, had not the Engliſh been informed, that thoſe countries produced furs in great abundance. From that moment the country became an object of deſire; it was found that furs were things very much wanted in England; the ladies edged ſome of their cloaths with furs, and muffs were worn both by gentlemen and ladies. In ſhort, furs were found indiſpenſably neceſſary for the happineſs of the ſtate: and the king was conſequently petitioned to grant not only the country of Canada, but all the ſavages belonging to it to the ſubjects of England,

in

in order to have the people ſupplied with proper quantities of this neceſſary commodity.

So very reaſonable a requeſt was immediately complied with, and large colonies were ſent abroad to procure furs, and take poſſeſſion. The French who were equally in want of furs, (for they are as fond of muffs and tippets as the Engliſh) made the very ſame requeſt to their monarch, and met with the ſame gracious reception from their king, who generouſly granted what was not his to give. Wherever the French landed, they called the country their own; and the Engliſh took poſſeſſion wherever they came upon the ſame equitable pretenſions. The harmleſs ſavages made no oppoſition; and could the intruders have agreed together, they might peaceably have ſhared this deſolate country between them. But they quarrelled about the boundaries of their ſettlements, about grounds and rivers to which niether ſide could ſhow any other right than that of power, and which neither could occupy but by uſurpation. Such is the conteſt, that no honeſt man can heartily wiſh ſucceſs to either party.

The war has continued for ſome time with various ſucceſs. At firſt the French ſeemed victorious; but

but the Engliſh have of late diſpoſſeſſed them of the whole country in diſpute. Think not, however, that ſucceſs on one ſide is the harbinger of peace: on the contrary, both parties muſt be heartily tired to affect even a temporary reconciliation. It ſhould ſeem the buſineſs of the victorious party to offer terms of peace; but there are many in England, who, encouraged by ſucceſs, are ſtill for protracting the war.

The beſt Engliſh politicians, however, are ſenſible, that to keep their preſent conqueſts would rather be a burden than an advantage to them, rather a diminution of their ſtrength than an increaſe of power. It is in the politic as in the human conſtitution; if the limbs grow too large for the body, their ſize, inſtead of improving, will diminiſh the vigour of the whole. The colonies ſhould always bear an exact proportion to the mother-country; when they grow populous, they grow powerful; and by becoming powerful, they become independent alſo; thus ſubordination is deſtroyed, and a country ſwallowed up in the extent of its own dominions. The Turkiſh empire would be more formidable, were it leſs extenſive; were it not for thoſe countries, which it can neither command, nor give entirely away; which it

is

s obliged to protect, but from which it has no power to exact obedience.

Yet, obvious as theſe truths are, there are many Engliſhmen who are for tranſplanting new colonies into this late acquiſition, for peopling the deſarts of America with the refuſe of their countrymen, and, (as they expreſs it) with the waſte of an exuberant nation. But who are thoſe unhappy creatures who are to be thus drained away? Not the ſickly, for they are unwelcome gueſts abroad as well as at home; nor the idle, for they would ſtarve as well behind the Applachian mountains as in the ſtreets of London. This refuſe is compoſed of the laborious and enterpriſing, of ſuch men as can be ſerviceable to their country at home, of men who ought to be regarded as the ſinews of the people, and cheriſhed with every degree of political indulgence. And what are the commodities which this colony, when eſtabliſhed, are to produce in return? Why, raw ſilk, hemp, and tobacco. England, therefore, muſt make an exchange of her beſt and braveſt ſubjects for raw ſilk, hemp, and tobacco; her hardy veterans and honeſt tradeſmen, muſt be trucked for a box of ſnuff or a ſilk petticoat. Strange abſurdity! Sure the politics of the Daures are not more ſtrange, who ſell their religion, their wives

and their liberty, for a glaſs bead, or a paultry pen-knife. Farewel.

LETTER XVIII.

From the ſame.

THE Engliſh love their wives with much paſſion, the Hollanders with much prudence. The Engliſh, when they give their hands, frequently give their hearts; the Dutch give the hand, but keep the heart wiſely in their own poſſeſſion. The Engliſh love with violence, and expect violent love in return; the Dutch are ſatisfied with the ſlighteſt acknowledgements, for they give little away. The Engliſh expend many of the matrimonial comforts in the firſt year; the Dutch frugally husband out their pleaſures, and are always conſtant, becauſe they are always indifferent.

There ſeems very little difference between a Dutch bridegroom and a Dutch huſband. Both are equally poſſeſſed of the ſame cool unexpecting ſerenity; they can ſee neither Elyſium nor Paradiſe behind the curtain; and *Yiffrow* is not more a goddeſs on the wedding

wedding night, than after twenty years matrimonial acquaintance. On the other hand, many of the Engliſh marry, in order to have one happy month in their lives; they ſeem incapable of looking beyond that period; they unite in hopes of finding rapture, and diſappointed in that, diſdain ever to accept of happineſs. From hence we ſee open hatred enſue; or, what is worſe, concealed diſguſt under the appearance of fulſome endearment. Much formality, great civility, and ſtudied compliments, are exhibited in public; croſs looks, ſulky ſilence, or open recrimination, fill up their hours of private entertainment.

Hence I am taught, whenever I ſee a new married couple more than ordinarily fond before faces, to conſider them as attempting to impoſe upon the company or themſelves, either hating each other heartily, or conſuming that ſtock of love in the beginning of their courſe, which ſhould ſerve them through their whole journey. Neither ſide ſhould expect thoſe inſtances of kindneſs which are inconſiſtent with true freedom or happineſs to beſtow. Love, when founded in the heart, will ſhew itſelf in a thouſand unpremeditated ſallies of fondneſs; but every cool deliberate exhibition of the paſſion, only argues little underſtanding, or great inſincerity.

Choang was the fondeſt huſband, and Hanſi the moſt endearing wife, in all the kingdom of Corea: they were a pattern of conjugal bliſs; the inhabitants of the country around ſaw, and envied their felicity; wherever Choang came, Hanſi was ſure to follow; and in all the pleaſures of Hanſi, Choang was admitted a partner. They walked hand in hand wherever they appeared, ſhewing every mark of mutual ſatisfaction, embracing, kiſſing, their mouths were for ever joined; and, to ſpeak in the language of anatomy, it was with them one perpetual anaſtomoſis.

Their love was ſo great, that it was thought nothing could interrupt their mutual peace; when an accident happened, which in ſome meaſure diminiſhed the huſband's aſſurance of his wife's fidelity; for love ſo refined as his was ſubject to a thouſand little diſquietudes.

Happening to go one day alone among the tombs that lay at ſome diſtance from his houſe, he there perceived a lady dreſſed in the deepeſt mourning, (being cloathed all over in white) fanning the wet clay that was raiſed over one of the graves with a large fan, which ſhe held in her hand. Choang, who had early been taught wiſdom in the ſchool of Lao,

Lao, was unable to aſſign a cauſe for her preſent employment; and coming up, civilly demanded the reaſon. "Alas," replied the lady, her eyes bathed in tears, "how is it poſſible to ſurvive the loſs of my huſband, who lies buried in this grave! he was the beſt of men, the tendereſt of huſbands: with his dying breath he bid me never marry again till the earth over his grave ſhould be dry; and here you ſee me ſteadily reſolving to obey his will, and endeavouring to dry it with my fan. I have employed two whole days in fulfilling his commands, and am determined not to marry till they are punctually obeyed, even though his grave ſhould take up four days in drying."

Choang, who was ſtruck with the widow's beauty, could not, however, avoid ſmiling at her haſte to be married; but, concealing the cauſe of his mirth, civilly invited her home; adding, that he had a wife who might be capable of giving her ſome conſolation. As ſoon as he and his gueſt were returned, he imparted to Hanſi in private what he had ſeen, and could not avoid expreſſing his uneaſineſs, that ſuch might be his own caſe if his deareſt wife ſhould one day happen to ſurvive him.

It

It is impoſſible to deſcribe Hanſi's reſentment at ſo unkind a ſuſpicion. As her paſſion for him was not only great, but extremely delicate, ſhe employed tears, anger, frowns, and exclamations, to chide his ſuſpicions; the widow herſelf was inveighed againſt; and Hanſi declared ſhe was reſolved never to ſleep under the ſame roof with a wretch, who, like her, could be guilty of ſuch bare-faced inconſtancy. The night was cold and ſtormy; however, the ſtranger was obliged to ſeek another lodging, for Choang was not diſpoſed to reſiſt, and Hanſi would have her way.

The widow had ſcarce been gone an hour, when an old diſciple of Choang's, whom he had not ſeen for many years, came to pay him a viſit. He was received with the utmoſt ceremony, placed in the moſt honourable ſeat at ſupper, and the wine began to circulate with great freedom. Choang and Hanſi exhibited open marks of mutual tenderneſs, and unfeigned reconciliation: nothing could equal their apparent happineſs; ſo fond an huſband, ſo obedient a wife, few could behold without regretting their own infelicity. When, lo! their happineſs was at once diſturbed by a moſt fatal accident. Choang fell lifeleſs in an apoplectic fit upon the floor. Every method was uſed, but in vain, for

his

his recovery. Hanſi was at firſt inconſolable for his death: after ſome hours, however, ſhe found ſpirits to read his laſt will. The enſuing day ſhe began to moralize and talk wiſdom; the next day ſhe was able to comfort the young diſciple; and, on the third, to ſhorten a long ſtory, they both agreed to be married.

There was now no longer mourning in the apartments; the body of Choang was now thruſt into an old coffin, and placed in one of the meaneſt rooms, there to lie unattended until the time preſcribed by law for his interment. In the mean time Hanſi, and the young diſciple, were arrayed in the moſt magnificent habits; the bride wore in her noſe a jewel of immenſe price, and her lover was dreſſed in all the finery of his former maſter, together with a pair of artificial whiſkers that reached down to his toes. The hour of their nuptials was arrived; the whole family ſympathized with their approaching happineſs; the apartments were brightned up with lights that diffuſed the moſt exquiſite perfume, and a luſtre more bright than noon-day. The lady expected her youthful lover in an inner apartment with impatience; when his ſervant approaching with terror in his countenance, informed her, that his maſter was fallen into a fit, which

which would certainly be mortal unleſs the heart of a man lately dead could be obtained, and applied to his breaſt. She ſcarce waited to hear the end of his ſtory, when, tucking up her cloaths, ſhe ran with a mattock in her hand to the coffin, where Choang lay, reſolving to apply the heart of her dead huſband as a cure for the living. She therefore ſtruck the lid with the utmoſt violence. In a few blows the coffin flew open, when the body, which to all appearance had been dead, began to move. Terrified at the ſight, Hanſi dropped the mattock, and Choang walked out, aſtoniſhed at his own ſituation, his wife's unuſual magnificence, and her more amaſing ſurpriſe. He went among the apartments, unable to conceive the cauſe of ſo much ſplendour. He was not long in ſuſpenſe before his domeſtics informed him of every tranſaction ſince he firſt became inſenſible. He could ſcarce believe what they told him, and went in purſuit of Hanſi herſelf, in order to receive more certain information, or to reproach her infidelity. But ſhe prevented his reproaches: he found her weltering in blood; for ſhe had ſtabbed herſelf to the heart, being unable to ſurvive her ſhame and diſappointment.

Choang, being a philoſopher, was too wiſe to make any loud lamentations; he thought it beſt to bear

bear his loſs with ſerenity; ſo, mending up the old coffin where he had lain himſelf, he placed his faithleſs ſpouſe in his room; and, unwilling that ſo many nuptial preparations ſhould be expended in vain, he the ſame night married the widow with the large fan.

As they were both appriſed of the foibles of each other before hand, they knew how to excuſe them after marriage. They lived together for many year in great tranquillity, and not expecting rapture made a ſhift to find contentment. Farewel.

LETTER XIX.

From the ſame.

THE gentleman dreſſed in black, who was my companion through Weſtminſter-Abbey, came yeſterday to pay me a viſit; and after drinking tea, we both reſolved to take a walk together, in order to enjoy the freſhneſs of the country, which now begins to reſume its verdure. Before we got out of the ſuburbs, however, we were ſtopped in one of the ſtreets by a crowd of people, gathered in a cir-

cle round a man and his wife, who ſeemed too loud and too angry to be underſtood. The people were highly pleaſed with the diſpute, which upon inquiry we found to be between Dr Cacafogo, an apothecary, and his wife. The doctor, it ſeems, coming unexpectedly unto his wife's apartment, found a gentleman there in circumſtances not in the leaſt equivocal.

The doctor, who was a perſon of nice honour, reſolving to revenge the flagrant inſult, immediately flew to the chimney-piece, and taking down a ruſty blunderbuſs, drew the trigger upon the defiler of his bed; and the delinquent would certainly have been ſhot through the head, but that the piece had not been charged for many years. The gallant made a ſhift to eſcape through the window, but the lady ſtill remained; and as ſhe well knew her huſband's temper, undertook to manage the quarrel without a ſecond. He was furious and ſhe loud; their noiſe had gathered all the mob, who charitably aſſembled on the occaſion, not to prevent, but to enjoy, the quarrel.

"Alas," ſaid I to my companion, "what will become of this unhappy creature thus caught in adultery! Believe me, I pity her from my heart; her

her huſband, I ſuppoſe, will ſhew her no mercy. Will they burn her as in India, or behead her as in Perſia? will they load her with ſtripes as in Turkey, or keep her in perpetual impriſonment, as with us in China? Pr'ythee, what is the wife's puniſhment in England for ſuch offences?"—"When a lady is thus caught tripping," replied my companion, "they never puniſh her, but the huſband."—"you ſurely jeſt," interrupted I; "I am a foreigner, and you would abuſe my ignorance!" "I am really ſerious," returned he. "Dr Cacafogo has caught his wife in the act; but as he had no witneſſes, his ſmall teſtimony goes for nothing; the conſequence, therefore, of his diſcovery will be, that ſhe may be packed off to live among her relations, and the doctor muſt be obliged to allow her a ſeparate maintenance."—"Amazing!" cried I; "is it not enough that ſhe is permitted to live ſeparate from the object ſhe deteſts, but muſt he give her money to keep her in ſpirits too?"—"That he muſt," ſays my guide; "and be called a *cuckold* by all his neighbours into the bargain. The men will laugh at him, the ladies will pity him; and all that his warmeſt friends can ſay in his favour, will be, 'That the poor good ſoul has never had any harm in him.'"—"I want patience," interrupted I; "what! are there no private chaſtiſements for his wife; no ſchools of penitence

to ſhew her her folly; no rods for ſuch delinquents?" —"Pſha, man," replied he, ſmiling "if every delinquent among us were to be treated in your manner, one half of thekingdom would flog the other."

I muſt confeſs, my dear Fum, that if I were an Engliſh huſband, of all things I would take care not to be jealous, nor buſily pry into thoſe ſecrets my wife was pleaſed to keep from me. Should I detect her infidelity, what is the conſequence? If I calmly pocket the abuſe, I am laughed at by her and her gallant; if I talk my griefs aloud like a tragedy-hero, I am laughed at by the whole world. The courſe then I'd take would be, whenever I went out, to tell my wife where I was going, leſt I ſhould unexpectedly meet her abroad in company with ſome dear deceiver. Whenever I returned, I would uſe a peculiar rap at the door, and give four loud hems as I walked deliberately up the ſtair-caſe. I would never inquiſitively peep under her bed, or look behind the curtains. And even though I knew the captain was there, I would calmly take a diſh of my wife's cool tea, and talk of the army with reverence.

Of all nations, the Ruſſians ſeem to me to behave moſt wiſely in ſuch circumſtances. The wife promiſes

miſes her huſband never to let him ſee her tranſgreſſions of this nature; and he as punctually promiſes, whenever ſhe is ſo detected, without the leaſt anger, to beat her without mercy: ſo they both know what each has to expect; the lady tranſgreſſes, is beaten, taken again into favour, and all goes on as before.

When a Ruſſian young lady, therefore, is to be married, her father, with a cudgel in his hand, aſks the bridegroom whether he chuſes this virgin for his bride? to which the other replies in the affirmative. Upon this, the father turning the lady three times round, and giving her three ſtrokes with his cudgel on the back—"My dear," cries he, "theſe are the laſt blows you are ever to receive from your tender father; I reſign my authority and my cudgel to your huſband; he knows better than me the uſe of either." The bridegroom knows decorums too well to accept of the cudgel abruptly; he aſſures the father, that the lady will never want it, and that he would not for the world make any uſe of it. But the father, who knows what the lady may want better than he, inſiſts upon his acceptance. Upon this, there follows a ſcene of Ruſſian politeneſs, while one refuſes, and the other offers, the cudgel. The whole, however, ends with

with the bridegrooms's taking it, upon which the lady drops a curtſey in token of obedience, and the ceremony proceeds as uſual.

There is ſomething exceſſively fair and open in this method of courtſhip. By this, both ſides are prepared for all the matrimonial adventures that are to follow. Marriage has been compared to a game of ſkill for life; it is generous thus in both parties to declare they are ſharpers in the beginning. In England, I am told, both ſides uſe every art to conceal their defects from each other before marriage; and the reſt of their lives may be regarded as doing penance for their former diſſimulation. Farewel.

LETTER XX.

From the ſame.

THE republic of letters is a very common expreſſion among the Europeans; and yet, when applied to the learned of Europe, is the moſt abſurd that can be imagined, ſince nothing is more unlike a republic than the ſociety which goes by that name.

From

From this expreſſion one would be apt to imagine, that the learned were united into a ſingle body, joining their intereſts, and concurring in the ſame deſign. From this one might be apt to compare them to our literary ſocieties in China, where each acknowledges a juſt ſubordination; and all contribute to build the temple of ſcience, without attempting from ignorance or envy to obſtruct each other.

But very different is the ſtate of learning here; every member of this fancied republic is deſirous of governing, and none willing to obey; each looks upon his fellow as a rival, not an aſſiſtant, in the ſame purſuit. They calumniate, they injure, they deſpiſe, they ridicule each other: If one man writes a book that pleaſes, others ſhall write books to ſhew that he might have given ſtill greater pleaſure, or ſhould not have pleaſed. If one happens to hit upon ſomething new, there are numbers ready to aſſure the public that all this was no novelty to them or the learned; that Cardanus or Brunus, or ſome other author too dull to be generally read, had anticipated the diſcovery. Thus, inſtead of uniting like the members of a commonwealth, they are divided into almoſt as many factions as there are men; and their jarring conſtitution, inſtead of being

being ſtiled a republic of letters, ſhould be entitled, an anarchy of literature.

It is true, there are ſome of ſuperior abilities who reverence and eſteem each other; but their mutual admiration is not ſufficient to ſhield off the contempt of the crowd. The wiſe are but few, and they praiſe with a feeble voice; the vulgar are many, and roar in reproaches. The truly great ſeldom unite in ſocieties, have few meetings, no cabals; the dunces hunt in full cry till they have run down a reputation, and then ſnarl and fight with each other about dividing the ſpoil. Here you may ſee the compilers, and the book-anſwerers of every month, when they have cut up ſome reſpectable name, moſt frequently reproaching each other with ſtupidity and dulneſs: reſembling the wolves of the Ruſſian foreſt, who prey upon veniſon, or horſes fleſh when they can get it; but in caſes of neceſſity, lying in wait to devour each other. While they have new books to cut up, they make a hearty meal; but if this reſource ſhould unhappily fail, then it is that critics eat up critics, and compilers rob from compilations.

Confucius obſerves that it is the duty of the learned to unite ſociety more cloſely, and to perſuade men

men to become citizens of the world; but the authors I refer to, are not only for diſuniting ſociety, but kingdoms alſo; if the Engliſh are at war with France, the dunces of France think it their duty to be at war with thoſe of England. Thus Freron, one of their firſt-rate ſcribblers, thinks proper to characteriſe all the Engliſh writers in the groſs. "Their whole merit," ſays he, "conſiſts in exaggeration, and often in extravagance; correct their pieces as you pleaſe, there ſtill remains a leaven which *corrupts* the whole. They ſometimes diſcover genius, but not the ſmalleſt ſhare of taſte; England is not a ſoil for the plants of genius to thrive in." This is open enough, with not the leaſt adulation in the picture; but hear what a Frenchman of acknowledged abilities ſays upon the ſame ſubject—"I am at a loſs to determine in what we excel the Engliſh, or where they excel us; when I compare the merits of both in any one ſpecies of literary compoſition, ſo many reputable and pleaſing writers preſent themſelves from either country, that my judgment reſts in ſuſpence: I am pleaſed with the diſquiſition, without finding the object of my inquiry." But leſt you ſhould think the French alone are faulty in this reſpect, hear how an Engliſh journaliſt delivers his ſentiments of them. "We are amazed," ſays he, "to find ſo many works

tranſlated from the French, while we have ſuch numbers neglected of our own. In our opinion, notwithſtanding their fame throughout the reſt of Europe, the French are the moſt contemptible reaſoners (we had almoſt ſaid writers) that can be imagined. However, nevertheleſs, excepting, &c." Another Engliſh writer, Shaftſbury, if I remember, on the contrary, ſays, that the French authors are pleaſing and judicious, more methodical, and entertaining, than thoſe of his own country.

From theſe oppoſite pictures, you perceive that the good authors of either country praiſe, and the bad revile each other; and yet, perhaps, you'll be ſurpriſed that indifferent writers ſhould thus be the moſt apt to cenſure, as they have the moſt to apprehend from recrimination; you may, perhaps, imagine, that ſuch as are poſſeſſed of fame themſelves ſhould be moſt ready to declare their opinions, ſince what they ſay might paſs for deciſion. But the truth happens to be, that the great are ſolicitous only of raiſing their own reputations, while the oppoſite claſs, alas! are ſolicitous of bringing every reputation down to a level with their own.

But let us acquit them of malice and envy; a critic is often guided by the ſame motives that direct

rect his author. The author endeavours to perſuade us, that he has written a good book: the critic is equally ſolicitous to ſhew that he could write a better, had he thought proper. A critic is a being poſſeſſed of all the vanity, but not the genius, of a ſcholar: incapable, from his native weakneſs, of lifting himſelf from the ground, he applies to contiguous merit for ſupport, makes the ſportive ſallies of another's imagination his ſerious employment, pretends to take our feelings under his care, teaches where to condemn, where to lay the emphaſis of praiſe, and may with as much juſtice be called a man of taſte, as the Chineſe who meaſures his wiſdom by the length of his nails.

If then a book, ſpirited or humorous, happens to appear in the republic of letters, ſeveral critics are in waiting to bid the public not to laugh at a ſingle line of it, for themſelves had read it; and they know what is moſt proper to excite laughter. Other critics contradict the fulminations of this tribunal, call them all ſpiders, and aſſure the public, that they ought to laugh without reſtraint. Another ſet are in the mean time quietly employed in writing notes to the book, intended to ſhew the particular paſſages to be laughed at; when theſe are out, others ſtill there are who write notes upon

notes. Thus a ſingle new book employs not only the paper-makers, the printers, the preſs-men, the book-binders, the hawkers, but twenty critics, and as many compilers. In ſhort, the body of the learned may be compared to a Perſian army, where there are many pioneers, ſeveral ſutlers, numberleſs ſervants, women and children in abundance, and but few ſoldiers. Adieu.

LETTER XXI.

To the ſame.

THE Engliſh are as fond of ſeeing plays acted as the Chineſe; but there is a vaſt difference in the manner of conducting them. We play our pieces in the open air, the Engliſh theirs under cover; we act by day-light, and they by the blaze of torches. One of our plays continues eight or ten days ſucceſſively; an Engliſh piece ſeldom takes up above four hours in the repreſentation.

My companion in black, with whom I am now beginning to contract an intimacy, introduced me a few nights ago to the play-houſe, where we placed ourſelves conveniently at the foot of the ſtage. As

the

the curtain was not drawn before my arrival, I had an opportunity of obſerving the behaviour of the ſpectators, and indulging thoſe reflections which novelty generally inſpires.

The rich in general were placed in the loweſt ſeats, and the poor roſe above them in degrees proportioned to their poverty. The order of precedence ſeemed here inverted; thoſe who were undermoſt all the day, now enjoyed a temporary eminence, and became maſters of the ceremonies. It was they who called for the muſic, indulging every noiſy freedom, and teſtifying all the inſolence of beggary in exaltation.

They who held the middle region ſeemed not ſo riotous as thoſe above them, nor yet ſo tame as thoſe below; to judge by their looks, many of them ſeemed ſtrangers there as well as myſelf. They were chiefly employed during this period of expectation in eating oranges, reading the ſtory of the play, or making aſſignations.

Thoſe who ſat in the loweſt rows, which are called the pit, ſeemed to conſider themſelves as judges of the merit of the poet and the performers; they were aſſembled partly to be amuſed, and partly to ſhew

ſhew their taſte; appearing to labour under that reſtraint which an affectation of ſuperior diſcernment generally produces. My companion, however, informed me, that not one in an hundred of them knew even the firſt principles of criticiſm; that they aſſumed the right of being cenſors becauſe there was none to contradict their pretenſions; and that every man who now called himſelf a connoiſſeur, became ſuch to all intents and purpoſes.

Thoſe who ſat in the boxes appeared in the moſt unhappy ſituation of all. The reſt of the audience came merely for their own amuſement; theſe rather to furniſh out a part of the entertainment themſelves. I could not avoid conſidering them as acting parts in dumb-ſhew; not a curtſey or nod, that was not the reſult of art; not a look nor a ſmile that was not deſigned for murder. Gentlemen and ladies ogled each other through ſpectacles; for my companion obſerved, that blindneſs was of late become faſhionable, all affected indifference and eaſe, while their hearts at the ſame time burned for conqueſt. Upon the whole, the lights, the muſic, the ladies in their gayeſt dreſſes, the men with chearfulneſs and expectation in their looks, all conſpired to make a moſt agreeable picture and to

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fill an heart that ſympathiſes at human happineſs with inexpreſſible ſerenity.

The expected time for the play to begin at laſt arrived, the curtain was drawn, and the actors came on. A woman, who perſonated a queen, came in curtſeying to the audience, who clapped their hands upon her appearance. Clapping of hands is, it ſeems, the manner of applauding in England: the manner is abſurd; but every country, you know, has its peculiar abſurdities. I was equally ſurpriſed, however, at the ſubmiſſion of the actreſs, who ſhould have conſidered herſelf as a queen, as at the little diſcernment of the audience who gave her ſuch marks of applauſe before ſhe attempted to deſerve them. Preliminaries between her and the audience being thus adjuſted, the dialogue was ſupported between her and a moſt hopeful youth, who acted the part of her confidant. They both appeared in extreme diſtreſs; for it ſeems the queen had loſt a child ſome fifteen years before, and ſtill kept its dear reſemblance next her heart, while her kind companion bore a part in her ſorrows.

Her lamentations grew loud. Comfort is offered, but ſhe deteſts the very ſound. She bids them preach comfort to the winds. Upon this her huſband

band comes in, who ſeeing the queen ſo much afflicted, can himſelf hardly refrain from tears, or avoid partaking in the ſoft diſtreſs. After thus grieving through three ſcenes, the curtain dropped for the firſt act.

"Truly," ſaid I to my companion, "theſe kings and queens are very much diſturbed at no very great misfortune; certain I am, were people of humbler ſtations to act in this manner, they would be thought diveſted of common ſenſe." I had ſcarce finiſhed this obſervation, when the curtain roſe, and the king came on in a violent paſſion. His wife had, it ſeems, refuſed his proffered tenderneſs, had ſpurned his royal embrace; and he ſeemed reſolved not to ſurvive her fierce diſdain. After he had thus fretted, and the queen had fretted through the ſecond act, the curtain was let down once more.

"Now," ſays my companion, "you perceive the king to be a man of ſpirit, he feels at every pore; one of your phlegmatic ſons of clay would have given the queen her own way, and let her come to herſelf by degrees; but the king is for immediate tenderneſs, or inſtant death: death and tenderneſs are leading paſſions of every modern buſkined hero; this

this moment they embrace, and the next ſtab, mixing daggers and kiſſes in every period."

I was going to ſecond his remarks, when my attention was engroſſed by a new object; a man came in balancing a ſtraw upon his noſe, and the audience were clapping their hands in all the raptures of applauſe. "To what purpoſe," cried I, "does this unmeaning figure make his appearance; is he a part of the plot?"—"Unmeaning do you call him?" replied my friend in black; "this is one of the moſt important characters of the whole play; nothing pleaſes the people more than ſeeing a ſtraw balanced; there is ſomething ſuited to every apprehenſion in the ſight; and a fellow poſſeſſed of talents like theſe is ſure of making his fortune."

The third act now began with an actor, who came to inform us that he was the villain of the play, and intended to ſhew ſtrange things before all was over. He was joined by another, who ſeemed as much diſpoſed for miſchief as he; their intrigues continued through this whole diviſion. "If that be a villain," ſaid I, "he muſt be a very ſtupid one, to tell his ſecrets without being aſked; ſuch ſoliloquies of late are never admitted in China."

The noiſe of clapping interrupted me once more; a child of ſix years old was learning to dance on the ſtage, which gave the ladies and mandarines infinite ſatisfaction. "I am ſorrow," ſaid I, "to ſee the pretty creature ſo early learning ſo very bad a trade; dancing being, I preſume, as contemptible here as in China."—"Quite the reverſe," interrupted my companion; "dancing is a very reputable and genteel employment here; men have a greater chance for encouragement from the merit of their heels than their heads. One who jumps up, and flouriſhes his toes three times before he comes to the ground, may have three hundred a-year; he who flouriſhes them four times, gets four hundred; but he who arrives at five is ineſtimable, and may demand what ſalary he thinks proper. The female dancers too are valued for this ſort of jumping and croſſing; and it is a cant word among them, that ſhe deſerves moſt who ſhews higheſt. But the fourth act is begun, let us be attentive."

In the fourth act the queen finds her long loſt child, now grown up into a youth of ſmart parts and great qualifications; wherefore ſhe wiſely conſiders that the crown will fit his head better than that of her huſband, whom ſhe knows to be a driveler. The king diſcovers her deſign, and here comes on the deep

deep diſtreſs; he loves the queen, and he loves the kingdom; he reſolves therefore, in order to poſſeſs both, that her ſon muſt die. The queen exclaims at his barbarity; is frantic with rage, and at length overcome with ſorrow, falls into a fit; upon which the curtain drops, and the act is concluded.

"Obſerve the art of the poet," cries my companion; "when the queen can ſay no more, ſhe falls into a fit. While thus her eyes are ſhut, while ſhe is ſupported in the arms of Abigail, what horrors do we not fancy, we feel it in every nerve; take my word for it, that fits are the true apoſiopeſis of modern tragedy."

The fifth act began, and a buſy piece it was. Scenes ſhifting, trumpets ſounding, mobs hallooing, carpets ſpreading, guards buſtling from one door to another; gods, dæmons, daggers, racks, and ratſbane. But whether the king was killed, or the queen drowned, or the ſon was poiſoned, I have abſolutely forgotten.

When the play was over I could not avoid obſerving, that the perſons of the drama appeared in as much diſtreſs in the firſt act as the laſt. "How is

it poſſible," ſaid I, "to ſympathize with them through five long acts; pity is but a ſhort lived paſſion; I hate to hear an actor mouthing trifles, neither ſtartings, ſtrainings, nor attitudes, affect me unleſs there be cauſe: after I have been once or twice deceived by thoſe unmeaning alarms, my heart ſleeps in peace, probably unaffected by the principal diſtreſs. There ſhould be one great paſſion aimed at by the actor as well as the poet, all the reſt ſhould be ſubordinate, and only contribute to make that the greater; if the actor therefore exclaims upon every occaſion in the tones of deſpair, he attempts to move us too ſoon; he anticipates the blow, he ceaſes to affect, though he gains our applauſe."

I ſcarce perceived that the audience were almoſt all departed; wherefore, mixing with the crowd, my companion and I got into the ſtreet; where eſſaying an hundred obſtacles from coach-wheels and palanquin poles, like birds in their flight through the branches of a foreſt, after various turnings, we both at length got home in ſafety. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

From the ſame.

THE letter which came by the way of Smyrna, and which you ſent me unopened, was from my ſon. As I have permitted you to take copies of all thoſe I ſend to China, you might have made no ceremony in opening thoſe directed to me. Either in joy or ſorrow, my friend ſhould participate in my feelings. "It would give pleaſure to ſee a good man pleaſed at my ſucceſs; it would give almoſt equal pleaſure to ſee him ſympathize at my diſappointment."

Every account I receive from the eaſt ſeems to come loaded with ſome new affliction. My wife and daughter were taken from me, and yet I ſuſtained the loſs with intrepidity; my ſon is made a ſlave among the barbarians, which was the only blow which could have reached my heart: yes, I will indulge the tranſports of nature for a little, in order to ſhew I can overcome them in the end. "True magnanimity conſiſts not in NEVER falling, but in RISING every time we fall."

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When our mighty emperor had publiſhed his diſpleaſure at my departure, and ſeized upon all that was mine, my ſon was privately ſecreted from his reſentment. Under the protection and guardianſhip of Fum Hoam, the beſt and wiſeſt of all the inhabitants of China, he was for ſome time inſtructed in the learning of the miſſionaries, and the wiſdom of the eaſt. But hearing of my adventures, and incited by filial piety, he was reſolved to follow my fortunes, and ſhare my diſtreſs.

He paſſed the confines of China in diſguiſe; hired himſelf as a camel driver to a caravan that was croſſing the deſerts of Thibet, and was within one day's journey of the river Laur, which divides that country from India, when a body of wandering Tartars falling unexpectedly upon the caravan, plundered it, and made thoſe who eſcaped their firſt fury, carried ſlaves. By thoſe he was into the extenſive and deſolate regions that border on the ſhores of the Aral lake.

Here he lived by hunting; and was obliged to ſupply every day a certain proportion of the ſpoil to regale his ſavage maſters; his learning, his virtues, and even his beauty, were qualifications that no way ſerved to recommend him; they knew

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no merit but that of providing large quantities of milk and raw fleſh; and were ſenſible of no happineſs but that of rioting on the undreſſed meal.

Some merchants from Meſched, however, coming to trade with the Tartars for ſlaves, he was ſold among the number, and led into the kingdom of Perſia, where he is now detained. He is there obliged to watch the looks of a voluptuous and cruel maſter, a man fond of pleaſure, yet incapable of refinement, whom many years ſervice in war has taught pride, but not bravery.

That treaſure which I ſtill keep within my boſom, my child, my all that was left to me, is now ſlave*. Good heavens! why was this? why have I been introduced into this mortal apartment, to be a ſpectator of my own misfortunes, and the misfortunes of my fellow creatures! wherever I turn, what a labyrinth of doubt, error, and diſappointment appears! why was I brought into being; for what purpoſes made; from whence have I come; whither ſtrayed; or to what regions am I haſtening? Reaſon cannot reſolve. It lends a ray to ſhew the horrors of my priſon, but not a light to guide

* This whole apoſtrophe ſeems moſt literally tranſlated from Ambulaachamed, the Arabian poet.

guide me to eſcape them. Ye boaſted revelations of the earth, how little do you aid the enquiry!

How am I ſurpriſed at the inconſiſtency of the magi! their two principles of good and evil affright me. The Indian who bathes his viſage in urine, and calls it piety, ſtrikes me with aſtoniſhment. The Chriſtian who believes in three gods is highly abſurd. The Jews, who pretend that deity is pleaſed with the effuſion of blood, are not leſs diſpleaſing. I am equally ſurpriſed that rational beings can come from the extremities of the earth, in order to kiſs a ſtone, or ſcatter pebbles. How contrary to reaſon are thoſe! and yet all pretend to teach me to be happy.

Surely all men are blind and ignorant of truth. Mankind wanders, unknowing his way, from morning till the evening. Where ſhall we turn after happineſs; or is it wiſeſt to deſiſt from the purſuit? Like reptiles in a corner of ſome ſtupenduous palace, we peep from our holes, look about us, wonder at all we ſee, but are ignorant of the great Architect's deſign. O for a revelation of himſelf, for a plan of his univerſal ſyſtem! O for the reaſons of our creation; or why we were created to be thus unhappy!

happy! If we are to experience no other felicity but what this life affords, then are we miſerable indeed. If we are born only to look about us, repine, and die; then has heaven been guilty of injuſtice. If this life terminates my exiſtence, I deſpiſe the bleſſings of Providence, and the wiſdom of the giver. If this life be my all, let the following epitaph be written on the tomb of Altangi. "By my father's crimes I received this. By my own crimes I bequeath it to poſterity!"

LETTER XXIII.

To the ſame.

YET, while I ſometimes lament the caſe of humanity, and the depravity of human nature, there now and then appear gleams of greatneſs, that ſerve to relieve the eye, oppreſſed with the hideous proſpect, and reſemble thoſe cultivated ſpots that are ſometimes found in the midſt of an Aſiatic wildneſs. I ſee many ſuperior excellencies among the Engliſh, which it is not in the power of all their follies to hide: I ſee virtues, which in other coun-

tries are known only to a few, practiſed here by every rank of people.

I know not whether it proceeds from their ſuperior opulence that the Engliſh are more charitable than the reſt of mankind; whether, by being poſſeſſed of all the conveniencies of life themſelves, they have more leiſure to perceive the uneaſy ſituation of the diſtreſſed; whatever be the motive, they are not only the moſt charitable of any other nation, but moſt judicious in diſtinguiſhing the propereſt objects of compaſſion.

In other countries the giver is generally influenced by the immediate impulſe of pity; his generoſity is exerted as much to relieve his own uneaſy ſenſations, as to comfort the object in diſtreſs: in England benefactions are of a more general nature; ſome men of fortune and univerſal benevolence propoſe the proper objects; the wants and the merits of the petitioners are canvaſſed by the people; neither paſſion nor pity find a place in the cool diſcuſſion; and charity is then only exeated when it has received the approbation of reaſon.

A late inſtance of this finely directed benevolence forces itſelf ſo ſtrongly on my imagination, that it in

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a manner reconciles me to pleaſure, and once more makes me the univerſal friend of man.

The Engliſh and French have not only political reaſons to induce them to mutual hatred, but often the more prevailing motive of private intereſt to widen the breach; a war between other countries is carried on collectively, army fights againſt army, and a man's own private reſentment is loſt in that of the community; but in England and France the individuals of each country plunder each other at ſea without redreſs, and conſequently feel that animoſity againſt each other which paſſengers do at a robber. They have for ſometime carried on an expenſive war; and ſeveral captives have been taken on both ſides. Thoſe made priſoners by the French have been uſed with cruelty, and guarded with unneceſſary caution. Thoſe taken by the Engliſh, being much more numerous, were confined in the ordinary manner; and, not being releaſed by their countrymen, began to feel all thoſe inconveniencies which ariſe from want of covering and long confinement.

Their countrymen were informed of their deplorable ſituation; but they, more intent on annoying their enemies than relieving their friends, refuſed

the leaſt aſſiſtance. The Engliſh now ſaw thouſands of their fellow creatures ſtarving in every priſon, forſaken by thoſe whoſe duty it was to protect them, labouring with diſeaſe, and without cloaths to keep off the ſeverity of the ſeaſon. National benevolence prevailed over national animoſity: Their priſoners were indeed enemies, but they were enemies in diſtreſs; they ceaſed to be hateful, when they no longer continued to be formidable: forgetting, therefore, their national hatred, the men who were brave enough to conquer, were generous enough to forgive: and they, whom all the world ſeemed to have diſclaimed, at laſt found pity and redreſs from thoſe they attempted to ſubdue. A ſubſcription was opened, ample charities collected, proper neceſſaries procured, and the poor gay ſons of a merry nation were once more taught to reſume their former gaiety.

When I caſt my eye over the liſt of thoſe who contributed on this occaſion, I find the names almoſt entirely Engliſh; ſcarce one foreigner appears among the number. It was for Engliſhmen alone to be capable of ſuch exalted virtue. I own, I cannot look over this catalogue of good men and philoſophers, without thinking better of myſelf, becauſe it makes me entertain a more favourable opinion

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nion of mankind. I am particularly ſtruck with one who writes theſe words upon the paper that encloſed his benefaction: "The mite of an Engliſhman, a citizen of the world, to Frenchmen, priſoners of war, and naked." I only wiſh that he may find as much pleaſure from his virtues, as I have done in reflecting upon them; that alone will amply reward him. Such a one, my friend, is an honour to human nature; he makes no private diſtinctions of party; all that are ſtamped with the divine image of their Creator are friends to him; he is a "native of the world;" and the emperor of China may be proud that he has ſuch a countryman.

To rejoice at the deſtruction of our enemies, is a foible grafted upon human nature, and we muſt be permitted to indulge it: the true way of atoning for ſuch an ill-founded pleaſure, is thus to turn our triumph into an act of benevolence, and to teſtify our own joy by endeavouring to baniſh anxiety from others.

Hamti, the beſt and wiſeſt emperor that ever filled the throne, after having gained three ſignal victories over the Tartars, who had invaded his dominions, returned to Nankin in order to enjoy the glory of his conqueſt. After he had reſted for

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ſome days, the people, who are naturally fond of proceſſions, impatiently expected the triumphant entry, which emperors upon ſuch occaſions were accuſtomed to make. Their murmurs came to the emperor's ear. He loved his people, and was willing to do all in his power to ſatisfy their juſt deſires. He therefore aſſured them, that he intended, upon the next feaſt of the Lanthorns, to exhibit one of the moſt glorious triumphs that had ever been ſeen in China.

The people were in raptures at his condeſcenſion; and, on the appointed day, aſſembled at the gates of the palace with the moſt eager expectations. Here they waited for ſome time without ſeeing any of thoſe preparations which uſually precede a pageant. The lanthorn, with ten thouſand tapers, was not yet brought forth; the fire-works, which uſually covered the city walls, were not yet lighted; the people once more began to murmur at this delay; when, in the midſt of their impatience, the gates flew open, and the emperor himſelf appeared, not in ſplendour or magnificence, but in an ordinary habit, followed by the blind, the maimed, and the ſtrangers of the city, all in new cloaths, and each carrying in his hand money enough to ſupply his neceſſities for the year. The people were at

firſt amazed, but ſoon perceived the wiſdom of their king, who taught them, that to make one man happy, was more truly great than having ten thouſand captives groaning at the wheels of his chariot. Adieu.

LETTER XXIV.

To the ſame.

WHATEVER may be the merits of the Engliſh in other ſciences, they ſeem peculiarly excellent in the art of healing. There is ſcarcely a diſorder incident to humanity, againſt which they are not poſſeſſed with a moſt infallible antidote. The profeſſors of other arts confeſs the inevitable intricacy of things; talk with doubt, and decide with heſitation; but doubting is entirely unknown in medicine; the advertiſing profeſſors here delight in caſes of difficulty; be the diſorder never ſo deſperate or radical, you will find numbers in every ſtreet, who, by levelling a pill at the part affected, promiſe a certain cure without loſs of time, knowledge of a bed-fellow, or hindrance of buſineſs.

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When I conſider the aſſiduity of this profeſſion, their benevolence amazes me. They not only in general give their medicines for half value, but uſe the moſt perſuaſive remonſtrances to induce the ſick to come and be cured. Sure there muſt be ſomething ſtrangely obſtinate in an Engliſh patient, who refuſes ſo much health upon ſuch eaſy terms; does he take a pride in being bloated with a dropſy? does he find pleaſure in the alternations of an intermittent fever? or feel as much ſatisfaction in nurſing up his gout, as he found pleaſure in acquiring it? He muſt, or otherwiſe he would never reject ſuch repeated aſſurances of inſtant relief. What can be more convincing than the manner in which the ſick are invited to be well? The doctor firſt begs the moſt earneſt attention of the public to what he is going to propoſe; he ſolemnly affirms the pill was never found to want ſucceſs; he produces a liſt of thoſe who have been reſcued from the grave by taking it. Yet, notwithſtanding all this, there are many here who now and then think proper to be ſick; only ſick, did I ſay? There are ſome who even think proper to die! Yes, by the head of Confucius, they die; though they might have purchaſed the health-reſtoring ſpecific for half a crown at every corner.

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I am amazed, my dear Fum Hoam, that theſe doctors, who know what an obſtinate ſet of people they have to deal with, have never thought of attempting to revive the dead. When the living are found to reject their preſcriptions, they ought in conſcience to apply to the dead, from whom they can expect no ſuch mortifying repulſes; they would find in the dead the moſt complying patients imaginable; and what gratitude might they not expect from the patient's ſon, now no longer an heir, and his wife, now no longer a widow?

Think not, my friend, that there is any thing chimerical in ſuch an attempt; they already perform cures equally ſtrange: What can be more truly aſtoniſhing than to ſee old age reſtored to youth, and vigour to the moſt feeble conſtitutions; yet this is performed here every day; a ſimple electuary effects theſe wonders, even without the bungling ceremonies of having the patient boiled up in a kettle, or ground down in a mill.

Few phyſicians here go through the ordinary courſes of education, but receive all their knowledge of medicine by immediate inſpiration from heaven. Some are thus inſpired even in the womb; and, what is very remarkable, underſtand their pro-

feſſion as well at three years old as at threeſcore. Others have ſpent a great part of their lives unconſcious of any latent excellence, till a bankruptcy, or a reſidence in goal, have called their miraculous powers into exertion. And others ſtill there are, indebted to their ſuperlative ignorance alone for ſucceſs. The more ignorant the practitioner, the leſs capable is he thought of deceiving. The people here judge, as they do in the eaſt; where it is thought abſolutely requiſite that a man ſhould be an idiot before he pretend to be either a conjurer or a doctor.

When a phyſician by inſpiration is ſent for, he never perplexes the patient by previous examination; he aſks very few queſtions, and thoſe only for form ſake. He knows every diſorder by intuition. He adminiſters the pill or drop for every diſtemper; nor is more inquiſitive than the farrier while he drenches an horſe. If the patient lives, then has he one more to add to his ſurviving liſt; if he dies, then it may be juſtly ſaid of the patient's diſorder, "That as it was not cured, the diſorder was incurable."

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

From the ſame.

I Was ſome days ago in company with a politician, who very pathetically declaimed upon the miſerable ſituation of his country: he aſſured me, that the whole political machine was moving in a wrong track, and that ſcarce even abilities like his own could ever ſet it right again. "What have we," ſaid he, "to do with the wars on the continent? we are a commercial nation; we have only to cultivate commerce like our neighbours the Dutch; it is our buſineſs to increaſe trade by ſettling new colonies: riches are the ſtrength of a nation; and for the reſt, our ſhips, our ſhips alone will protect us." I found it vain to oppoſe my feeble arguments to thoſe of a man who thought himſelf wiſe enough to direct even the miniſtry; I fancied, however, that I ſaw with more certainty, becauſe I reaſoned without prejudice; I therefore begged leave, inſtead of argument, to relate a ſhort hiſtory. He gave me a ſmile at once of condeſcenſion and contempt, and I proceeded as follows to deſcribe,

THE RISE AND DECLENSION OF THE KINGDOM OF LAO.

Northward of China, and in one of the doublings of the great wall, the fruitful province of Lao enjoyed its liberty, and a peculiar government of its own. As the inhabitants were on all ſides ſurrounded by the wall, they feared no ſudden invaſion from the Tartars; and being each poſſeſſed of property, they were zealous in its defence.

The natural conſequences of ſecurity and affluence in any country, is a love of pleaſure; when the wants of nature are ſupplied, we ſeek after the conveniencies; when poſſeſſed of theſe, we deſire the luxuries of life; and when every luxury is provided, it is then ambition takes up the man, and leaves him ſtill ſomething to wiſh for: the inhabitants of the country, from primitive ſimplicity, ſoon began to aim at elegance, and from elegance proceeded to refinement. It was now found abſolutely requiſite, for the good of the ſtate, that the people ſhould be divided; formerly the ſame hand that was employed in tilling the ground, or in dreſſing up the manufactures, was alſo, in time of need, a ſoldier; but the cuſtom was now changed; for it was perceived, that a man bred up from childhood to

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the arts either of peace or war, became more eminent by this means in his reſpective profeſſion. The inhabitants were therefore now diſtinguiſhed into artizans and ſoldiers; and while thoſe improved the luxuries of life, theſe watched for the ſecurity of the people.

A country poſſeſſed of freedom has always two ſorts of enemies to fear: foreign foes, who attack its exiſtence from without; and internal miſcreants, who betray its liberties within. The inhabitants of Lao were to guard againſt both. A country of artizans were moſt likely to preſerve internal liberty; and a nation of ſoldiers were fitteſt to repel a foreign invaſion. Hence naturally aroſe a diviſion of opinion between the artizans and ſoldiers of the kingdom. The artizans ever complaining, that freedom was threatened by an armed internal force, were for diſbanding the ſoldiers, and inſiſted that their walls, their walls alone, were ſufficient to repel the moſt formidable invaſion: the warriors, on the contrary, repreſented the power of the neighbouring kings, the combinations formed againſt their ſtate, and the weakneſs of the wall which every earthquake might overturn. While this altercation continued, the kingdom might be juſtly ſaid to enjoy its greateſt ſhare of vigour: every order

der in the ſtate, by being watchful over each other, contributed to diffuſe happineſs equally, and balanced the ſtate. The arts of peace flouriſhed, nor were thoſe of war neglected; the neighbouring powers, who had nothing to apprehend from the ambition of men, whom they only ſaw ſolicitous not for riches but freedom, were contented to traffic with them: They ſent their goods to be manufactured in Lao, and paid a large price for them upon their return.

By theſe means this people at length became moderately rich, and their opulence naturally invited the invader; a Tartar prince led an immenſe army againſt them, and they as bravely ſtood up in their own defence; they were ſtill inſpired with a love of their country; they fought the barbarous enemy with fortitude, and gained a complete victory.

From this moment, which they regarded as the completion of their glory, hiſtorians date their downfal. They had riſen in ſtrength by a love of their country, and fell by indulging ambition. The country poſſeſſed by the invading Tartars, ſeemed to them a prize that would not only render them more formidable for the future, but which would

increaſe their opulence for the preſent; it was unanimouſly reſolved, therefore, both by ſoldiers and artizans, that thoſe deſolate regions ſhould be peopled by colonies from Lao. When a trading nation begins to act the conqueror, it is then perfectly undone: it ſubſiſts in ſome meaſure by the ſupport of its neighbours; while they continue to regard it without envy or apprehenſion, trade may flouriſh; but when once it preſumes to aſſert as its right what is only enjoyed as a favour, each country reclaims that part of commerce which it has no power to take back, and turns it into ſome other channel more honourable, though perhaps leſs convenient.

Every neighbour now began to regard with jealous eyes this ambitious commonwealth, and forbade their ſubjects any future intercourſe with them. The inhabitants of Lao, however, ſtill purſued the ſame ambitious maxims; it was from their colonies alone they expected riches; "and riches," ſaid they, "are ſtrength, and ſtrength is ſecurity." Numberleſs were the migrations of the deſperate and enterpriſing of this country, to people the deſolate dominions lately poſſeſſed by the Tartar; between theſe colonies, and the mother country; a very advantageous traffic was at firſt carried on; the republic

public ſent their colonies large quantities of the manufactures of the country, and they in return provided the republic with an equivalent in ivory and ginſeng. By this means the inhabitants became immenſely rich; and this produced an equal degree of voluptuouſneſs; for men who have much money will always find ſome fantaſtical modes of enjoyment. How ſhall I mark the ſteps by which they declined! Every colony, in proceſs of time, ſpreads over the whole country where it firſt was planted. As it grows more populous, it becomes more polite; and thoſe manufactures for which it was in the beginning obliged to others, it learns to dreſs up itſelf: ſuch was the caſe with the colonies of Lao; they in leſs than a century became a powerful and a polite people; and the more polite they grew, the leſs advantageous was the commerce which ſtill ſubſiſted between them and others. By this means the mother-country, being abridged in its commerce, grew poorer, but not leſs luxurious. Their former wealth introduced luxury; and whenever luxury once fixes, no art can either leſſen or remove it. Their commerce with their neighbours was totally deſtroyed; and that with their colonies was every day naturally and neceſſarily declining; they ſtill, however, preſerved the inſolence of wealth, without a power to ſupport it; and perſe-

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vered in being luxurious, while contemptible from poverty. In ſhort, the ſtate reſembled one of thoſe bodies bloated with diſeaſe, whoſe bulk is only a ſymptom of its wretchedneſs. Their former opulence only rendered them more impotent, as thoſe individuals who are reduced from riches to poverty, are of all men the moſt unfortunate and helpleſs. They had imagined, becauſe their colonies tended to make them rich upon the firſt acquiſition, they would ſtill continue to do ſo; they now found, however, that on themſelves alone they ſhould have depended for ſupport; that colonies ever afforded but temporary affluence, and when cultivated and polite are no longer uſeful. From ſuch a concurrence of circumſtances they ſoon became contemptible. The emperor Honti invaded them with a powerful army. Hiſtorians do not ſay whether their colonies were too remote to lend aſſiſtance, or elſe were deſirous of ſhaking off their dependence: But certain it is, they ſcarce made any reſiſtance; their walls were now found but a weak defence; and they at length were obliged to acknowledge ſubjection to the empire of China.

Happy, very happy, might they have been, had they known when to bound their riches and their glory. Had they known, that extending empire is

often diminiſhing power, that countries are ever ſtrongeſt which are internally powerful; that colonies, by draining away the brave and enterpriſing, leave the country in the hands of the timid and the avaricious; that walls give little protection, unleſs manned with reſolution; that too much commerce may injure a nation as well as too little; and that there is a wide difference between a conquering and a flouriſhing empire. Adieu.

LETTER XXVI.

From the ſame.

THOUGH fond of many acquaintances, I deſire an intimacy only with a few. The man in black, who I have often mentioned, is one whoſe friendſhip I could wiſh to acquire, becauſe he poſſeſſes my eſteem. His manners, it is true, are tinctured with ſome ſtrange inconſiſtencies; and he may be juſtly termed an humouriſt in a nation of humouriſts. Though he is generous even to profuſion, he affects to be thought a prodigy of parſimony and prudence; though his converſation be replete with the moſt ſordid and ſelfiſh maxims, his heart is dilated with

with the moſt unbounded love. I have known him profeſs himſelf a man-hater, while his cheek was glowing with compaſſion; and while his looks were ſoftened into pity, I have heard him uſe the language of unbounded ill-nature. Some affect humanity and tenderneſs, others boaſt of having ſuch diſpoſitions from nature; but he is the only man I ever knew who ſeemed aſhamed of his natural benevolence. He takes as much pains to hide his feelings as any hypocrite would to conceal his indifference; but on every unguarded moment the maſk drops off, and reveals him to the moſt ſuperficial obſerver.

In one of our late excurſions into the country, happening to diſcourſe upon the proviſion that was made for the poor in England, he ſeemed amazed how any of his countrymen could be ſo fooliſhly weak as to relieve occaſional objects of charity, when the laws had made ſuch ample proviſion for their ſupport. "In every pariſh houſe," ſays he, "the poor are ſupplied with food, cloaths, fire, and a bed to lie on; they want no more, I deſire no more myſelf; yet ſtill they ſeem diſcontented. I'm ſurpriſed at the inactivity of our magiſtrates, in not taking up ſuch vagrants who are only a weight upon the induſtrious; I'm ſurpriſed that the people are

found to relieve them, when they muſt be at the ſame time ſenſible that it, in ſome meaſure, encourages idleneſs, extravagance, and impoſture. Were I to adviſe any man for whom I had the leaſt regard I would caution him by all means not to be impoſed upon by their falſe pretences, let me aſſure you, Sir, they are impoſtors, every one of them; and rather merit a priſon than relief."

He was proceeding in this ſtrain earneſtly, to diſſuade me from an imprudence of which I am ſeldom guilty; when an old man, who ſtill had about him the remnants of tattered finery, implored our compaſſion. He aſſured us that he was no common beggar, but forced into the ſhameful profeſſion, to ſupport a dying wife and five hungry children. Being prepoſſeſſed againſt ſuch falſehoods, his ſtory had not the leaſt influence upon me; but it was quite otherwiſe with the man in black; I could ſee it viſibly operate upon his countenance, and effectually interrupt his harrangue. I could eaſily perceive that his heart burned to relieve the five ſtarving children, but he ſeemed aſhamed to diſcover his weakneſs to me. While he thus heſitated between compaſſion and pride, I pretended to look another way, and he ſeized this opportunity of giving the poor petitioner a piece of ſilver, bidding him at the

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ſame time, in order that I ſhould hear, go work for his bread, and not teaze paſſengers with ſuch impertinent falſehoods for the future.

As he had fancied himſelf quite unperceived, he continued, as we proceeded, to rail againſt beggars with as much animoſity as before; he threw in ſome epiſodes on his own amazing prudence and œconomy, with his profound ſkill in diſcovering impoſtors; he explained the manner in which he would deal with beggars were he a magiſtrate, hinted at enlarging ſome of the priſons for their reception, and told two ſtories of ladies that were robbed by beggar-men. He was beginning a third to the ſame purpoſe, when a ſailor with a wooden leg, once more croſſed our walks, deſiring our pity, and bleſſing our limbs. I was for going on without taking any notice, but my friend looking wiſhfully upon the poor petitioner, bid me ſtop, and he would ſhew me with how much eaſe he could at any time detect an impoſtor.

He now therefore aſſumed a look of importance, and in an angry tone began to examine the ſailor, demanding in what engagement he was thus diſabled and rendered unfit for ſervice. The ſailor replied in a tone as angrily as he, that he had been

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an officer on board a private ſhip of war, and that he had loſt his leg abroad in defence of thoſe who did nothing at home. At this reply, all my friend's importance vaniſhed in a moment; he had not a ſingle queſtion more to aſk; he now only ſtudied what method he ſhould take to relieve him unobſerved. He had however no eaſy part to act, as he was obliged to preſerve the appearance of ill nature before me, and yet relieve himſelf by relieving the ſailor. Caſting therefore a furious look upon ſome bundles of chips which the fellow carried in a ſtring at his back, my friend demanded how he ſold his matches; but not waiting for a reply, deſired, in a ſurly tone, to have a ſhilling's worth. The ſailor ſeemed at firſt ſurpriſed at his demand, but ſoon recollected himſelf, and preſenting his whole bundle—"Here, maſter," ſays he, "take all my cargo, and a bleſſing into the bargain."

It is impoſſible to deſcribe with what an air of triumph my friend marched off with his new purchaſe; he aſſured me that he was firmly of opinion, that thoſe fellows muſt have ſtolen their goods, who could thus afford to ſell them for half value; he informed me of ſeveral different uſes to which thoſe chips might be applied; he expatiated largely upon the ſavings that would reſult from lighting candles with

with a match inſtead of thruſting them into the fire. He averred, that he would as ſoon have parted with a tooth as his money to theſe vagabonds, unleſs for ſome valuable conſideration. I cannot tell how long this panegyric upon frugality and matches might have continued, had not this attention been called off by another object more diſtreſsful than either of the former. A woman in rags, with one child in her arms, and another on her back, was attempting to ſing ballads, but with ſuch a mournful voice that it was difficult to determine whether ſhe was ſinging or crying. A wretch, who, in the deepeſt diſtreſs ſtill aimed at good humour, was an object my friend was by no means capable of withſtanding: his vivacity and his diſcourſe were inſtantly interrupted; upon this occaſion his very diſſimulation had forſaken him. Even, in my preſence, he immediately applied his hands to his pockets, in order to relieve her; but gueſs his confuſion, when he found he had already given away all the money he carried about him to former objects. The miſery painted in the woman's viſage was not half ſo ſtrongly expreſſed as the agony in his. He continued to ſearch for ſome time, but to no purpoſe, till, at length, recollecting himſelf, with a face of ineffable good nature, as he had no money, he put into her hands his ſhilling's worth of matches.

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LETTER XXVII.

To the ſame.

AS there appeared ſomething reluctantly good in the character of my companion, I muſt own it ſurpriſed me what could be his motives for thus concealing virtues which others take ſuch pains to diſplay. I was unable to repreſs my deſire of knowing the hiſtory of a man who thus ſeemed to act under continual reſtraint, and whoſe benevolence was rather the effect of appetite than reaſon.

It was not however till after repeated ſolicitations he thought proper to gratify my curioſity. "If you are fond," ſays he, "of hearing *hair-breadth 'ſcapes*, my hiſtory muſt certainly pleaſe; for I have been for twenty years upon the very verge of ſtarving, without ever being ſtarved.

"My father, the younger ſon of a good family, was poſſeſſed of a ſmall living in the church. His education was above his fortune, and his generoſity greater than his education. Poor as he was, he had his flatterers ſtill poorer than himſelf; for every

every dinner he gave them, they returned him an equivalent in praiſe; and this was all he wanted: the ſame ambition that actuates a monarch at the head of an army, influenced my father at the head of his table; he told the ſtory of the ivy tree, and that was laughed at; he repeated the jeſt of the ſcholars two and one pair of breeches, and the company laughed at that; but the ſtory of Taffy in the ſedan-chair was ſure to ſet the table in a roar: thus his pleaſure increaſed in proportion to the pleaſure he gave; he loved all the world, and he fancied all the world loved him.

"As his fortune was but ſmall, he lived up to the very extent of it; he had no intentions of leaving his children money, for that was droſs; he was reſolved they ſhould have learning; for learning, he uſed to obſerve, was better than ſilver or gold. For this purpoſe he undertook to inſtruct us himſelf; and took as much pains to form our morals, as to improve our underſtanding. We were told that univerſal benevolence was what firſt cemented ſociety; we were taught to conſider all the wants of mankind as our own; to regard the *human face divine* with affection and eſteem; he wound us up to be mere machines of pity, and rendered us incapable of withſtanding the ſlighteſt impulſe made

either by real or fictitious diſtreſs; in a word, we were perfectly inſtructed in the art of giving away thouſands, before we were taught the more neceſſary qualifications of getting a farthing.

"I cannot avoid imagining, that thus refined by his leſſons out of all my ſuſpicion, and diveſted of even all the little cunning which nature had given me, I reſembled, upon my firſt entrance into the buſy and inſidious world, one of thoſe gladiators who were expoſed without armour in the amphitheatre at Rome. My father, however, who had only ſeen the world on one ſide, ſeemed to triumph in my ſuperior diſcernment; though my whole ſtock of wiſdom conſiſted in being able to talk like himſelf upon ſubjects that once were uſeful, becauſe they were then topics of the buſy world; but that now were utterly uſeleſs, becauſe connected with the buſy world no longer.

"The firſt opportunity he had of finding his expectations diſappointed, was at the very middling figure I made in the univerſity; he had flattered himſelf that he ſhould ſoon ſee me riſing into the foremoſt rank in literary reputation, but was mortified to find me utterly unnoticed and unknown. His diſappointment might have been partly aſcribed

ed to his having over-rated my talents, and partly to my diſlike of mathematical reaſonings at a time when my imagination and memory, yet unſatisfied, were more eager after new objects, than deſirous of reaſoning upon thoſe I knew. This did not, however, pleaſe my tutors, who obſerved, indeed, that I was a little dull; but at the ſame time allowed, that I ſeemed to be very *good-natured*, and had no harm in me.

" After I had reſided at college ſeven years, my father died, and left me—his bleſſing. Thus ſhoved from ſhore without ill-nature to protect, or cunning to guide, or proper ſtores to ſubſiſt me in ſo dangerous a voyage, I was obliged to embark in the wide world at twenty-one. But in order to ſettle in life, my friends *adviſed* (for they always adviſe when they begin to deſpiſe us) they adviſed me, I ſay, to go into orders.

" To be obliged to wear a long wig, when I liked a ſhort one, or a black coat, when I generally dreſſed in brown, I thought was ſuch a reſtraint upon my liberty, that I abſolutely rejected the propoſal. A prieſt in England is not the ſame mortified creature with a bonze in China; with us, not he that faſts beſt, but eats beſt, is reckoned the beſt

liver; yet I rejected a life of luxury, indolence, and eaſe, from no other conſideration but that boyiſh one of dreſs. So that my friends were now perfectly ſatisfied I was undone; and yet they thought it a pity for one who had not the leaſt harm in him, and was ſo very good-natured.

"Poverty naturally begets dependence, and I was admitted as flatterer to a great man. At firſt I was ſurpriſed, that the ſituation of a flatterer at a great man's table could be thought diſagreeable; there was no great trouble in liſtening attentively when his lordſhip ſpoke, and laughing when he looked round for applauſe. This even good manners might have obliged me to perform. I found, however, too ſoon, that his lordſhip was a greater dunce than myſelf; and from that very moment flattery was at an end. I now rather aimed at ſetting him right, than at receiving his abſurdities with ſubmiſſion: to flatter thoſe we do not know is an eaſy taſk; but to flatter our intimate acquaintances, all whoſe foibles are ſtrongly in our eye, is drudgery inſupportable. Every time I now opened my lips in praiſe, my falſehood went to my conſcience; his lordſhip ſoon perceived me to be very unfit for ſervice; I was therefore diſcharged; my patron at the ſame time being graciouſly pleaſed

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to obſerve, that he believed I was tolerably good-natured, and had not the leaſt harm in me.

"Diſappointed in ambition, I had recourſe to love. A young lady, who lived with her aunt, and was poſſeſſed of a very pretty fortune, in her own diſpoſal, had given me, as I fancied, ſome reaſons to expect ſucceſs. The ſymptoms by which I was guided were ſtriking; ſhe had always laughed with me at her aukward acquaintance, and her aunt among the number; ſhe always obſerved, that a man of ſenſe would make a better huſband than a fool, and I as conſtantly applied the obſervation in my own favour. She continually talked in my company of friendſhip and the beauties of the mind, and ſpoke of Mr Shrimp, my rival's high-heeled ſhoes, with deteſtation. Theſe were circumſtances which I thought ſtrongly in my favour; ſo after reſolving, and re-reſolving, I had courage enough to tell her my mind. Miſs heard my propoſal with ſerenity, ſeeming at the ſame time to ſtudy the figures of her fan. Out at laſt it came. There was but one ſmall objection to complete our happineſs, which was no more, than—that ſhe was married three months before to Mr Shrimp, with high-heel'd ſhoes! By way of conſolation, however, ſhe obſerved, that though I was diſappointed in her, my

my addreſſes to her aunt would probably kindle her into ſenſibility; as the old lady always allowed me to be very good-natured, and not to have the leaſt ſhare of harm in me.

"Yet ſtill I had friends, numerous friends, and to them I was reſolved to apply. O friendſhip! thou fond ſoother of the human breaſt, to thee we fly in every calamity; to thee the wretched ſeek for ſuccour; on thee the care-tired ſon of miſery fondly relies; from thy kind aſſiſtance the unfortunate always hopes relief, and may be ever ſure of—diſappointment! My firſt application was to a city ſcrivener, who had frequently offered to lend me money when he knew I did not want it. I informed him, that now was the time to put his friendſhip to the teſt; that I wanted to borrow a couple of hundreds for a certain occaſion, and was reſolved to take it up from him." 'And pray, Sir,' cried my friend, 'do you want all this money?'—"Indeed I never wanted it more," returned I. 'I am ſorrow for that,' cries the ſcrivener, 'with all my heart; for they who want money when they come to borrow, will always want money when they ſhould come to pay.'

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"From him I flew with indignation to one of the beſt friends in the world, and made the ſame requeſt. 'Indeed, Mr Drybone', cries my friend, 'I always thought it would come to this. You know, Sir, I would not adviſe you but for your own good; but your conduct has hitherto been ridiculous in the higheſt degree, and ſome of your acquaintance always thought you a very ſilly fellow. Let me ſee, you want two hundred pounds; do you want only two hundred, Sir, exactly?'—"To confeſs a truth," returned I, "I ſhall want three hundred; but then I have another friend from whom I can borrow the reſt."—'Why then,' replied my friend, 'if you would take my advice; and you know I ſhould not preſume to adviſe you but for your own good, I would recommend it to you, to borrow the whole ſum from that other friend, and then one note will ſerve for all, you know.'

"Poverty now began to come faſt upon me, yet inſtead of growing more provident or cautious as I grew poor, I became every day more indolent and ſimple. A friend was arreſted for fifty pounds, I was unable to extricate him, except by becoming his bail. When at liberty, he fled from his creditors, and left me to take his place. In priſon I expected

expected greater ſatisfactions than I had enjoyed at large. I hoped to converſe with men in this new world ſimple and believing like myſelf, but I found them as cunning and as cautious as thoſe in the world I had left behind. They ſpunged up my money whilſt it laſted, borrowed my coals and never paid them, and cheated me when I played at cribbage. All this was done becauſe they believed me to be very good-natured, and knew that I had no harm in me.

"Upon my firſt entrance into this manſion, which is to ſome the abode of deſpair, I felt no ſenſations different from theſe I experienced abroad. I was now on one ſide the door, and thoſe who were unconfined were on the other: this was all the difference between us. At firſt indeed I felt ſome uneaſineſs, in conſidering how I ſhould be able to provide this week for the wants of the week enſuing; but after ſome time, if I found myſelf ſure of eating one day, I never troubled my head how I was to be ſupplied another. I ſeized every precarious meal with the utmoſt good humour, indulged no rants of ſpleen at my ſituation, never called down heaven and all the ſtars to behold me dining upon an halfpenny worth of radiſhes; my very companions were taught to believe, that I liked ſallad

better

better than mutton. I contented myſelf with thinking, that all my life I ſhould either eat white bread or brown; conſidered that all that happened was beſt, laughed when I was not in pain, took the world as it went, and read Tacitus often, for want of more books and company.

"How long I might have continued in this torpid ſtate of ſimplicity I cannot tell, had I not been rouzed by ſeeing an old acquaintance, whom I knew to be a prudent blockhead, preferred to a place in the government. I now found that I had purſued a wrong tract, and that the true way of being able to relieve others, was firſt to aim at independence myſelf. My immediate care, therefore, was to leave my preſent habitation, and make an entire reformation in my conduct and behaviour. For a free, open, undeſigning deportment, I put on that of cloſeneſs, prudence, and œconomy. One of the moſt heroic actions I ever performed, and for which I ſhall praiſe myſelf as long as I live was the refuſing half-a-crown to an old acquaintance, at the time when he wanted it, and I had it to ſpare; for this alone I deſerved to be decreed an ovation.

"I now therefore purſued a courſe of uninterrupted frugality, ſeldom wanted a dinner, and was

conſequently invited to twenty. I ſoon began to get the character of a ſaving hunks that had money; and inſenſibly grew into eſteem. Neighbours have aſked my advice in the diſpoſal of their daughters, and I have always taken care not to give any. I have contracted a friendſhip with an alderman, only by obſerving, that if we take a farthing from a thouſand pound, it will be a thouſand pound no longer. I have been invited to a pawn-broker's table, by pretending to hate gravy; and am now actually upon treaty of marriage with a rich widow, for only having obſerved that bread was riſing. If ever I am aſked a queſtion, whether I know it or not, inſtead of anſwering, I only ſmile and look wiſe. If a charity is propoſed, I go about with the hat, but put nothing in myſelf. If a wretch ſolicits my pity, I obſerve that the world is filled with impoſtors, and take a certain method of not being deceived, by never relieving. In ſhort, I now find the trueſt way of finding eſteem even from the indigent, is *to give away nothing, and thus have much in our power to give.*"

LETTER

LETTER XXVIII.

To the ſame.

LATELY, in company with my friend in black, whoſe converſation is now both my amuſement and inſtruction, I could not avoid obſerving the great numbers of old bachelors and maiden ladies with which this city ſeems to be over-run. "Sure marriage," ſaid I, "is not ſufficiently encouraged, or we ſhould never behold crowds of battered beaux and decayed coquets ſtill attempting to drive a trade they have been ſo long unfit for, and ſwarming upon the gaiety of the age. I behold an old bachelor in the moſt contemptible light, as an animal that lives upon the common ſtock without contributing his ſhare: he is a beaſt of prey, and the laws ſhould make uſe of as many ſtratagems, and as much force to drive the reluctant ſavage to the toils, as the Indians when they hunt the hyena or the rhinoceros. The mob ſhould be permitted to halloo after him, boys might play tricks on him with impunity, every well bred company ſhould laugh at him, and if when turned of ſixty, he offered to make love, his miſtreſs might ſpit in his face, or what

would be perhaps a greater puniſhment, ſhould fairly grant him the favour.

"As for old maids," continued I, "they ſhould not be treated with ſo much ſeverity, becauſe I ſuppoſe none would be ſo if they could. No lady in her ſenſes would chuſe to make a ſubordinate figure at chriſtenings and lyings in, when ſhe might be the principal herſelf; nor curry favour with a ſiſter-in-law, when ſhe might command an huſband; nor toil in preparing cuſtards, when ſhe might lie a-bed and give directions how they ought to be made; nor ſtifle all her ſenſations in demure formality, when ſhe might with matrimonial freedom ſhake her acquaintance by the hand, and wink at a double entendre. No lady could be ſo very ſilly as to live ſingle, if ſhe could help it. I conſider an unmarried lady declining into the vale of years, as one of thoſe charming countries bordering on China that lies waſte for want of proper inhabitants. We are not to accuſe the country, but the ignorance of its neighbours, who are inſenſible of its beauties, though at liberty to enter and cultivate the ſoil."

"Indeed, Sir," replied my companion, "you are very little acquainted with the Engliſh ladies, to think they are old maids againſt their will. I dare

dare venture to affirm that you can hardly ſelect one of them all, but has had frequent offers of marriage, which, either pride or avarice has not made her reject. Inſtead of thinking it a diſgrace, they take every occaſion to boaſt of their former cruelty; a ſoldier does not exult more when he counts over the wounds he has received, than a female veteran when ſhe relates the wounds ſhe has formerly given; exhauſtleſs when ſhe begins a narrative of the former death dealing power of her eyes. She tells of the knight in gold lace, who died with a ſingle frown, and never roſe again till —he was married to his maid: Of the ſquire, who being cruelly denied, in a rage, flew to the window, and lifting up the ſaſh, threw himſelf in an agony—into his arm-chair: Of the parſon, who, croſſed in love, reſolutely ſwallowed opium, which baniſhed the ſtings of deſpiſed love by—making him ſleep. In ſhort, ſhe talks over her former loſſes with pleaſure; and, like ſome tradeſmen, finds conſolation in the many bankruptcies ſhe has ſuffered.

"For this reaſon, whenever I ſee a ſuperannuated beauty ſtill unmarried, I tacitly accuſe her either of pride, avarice, cocquetry, or affectation. There is Miſs Jenny Tinderbox, I once remember her

her to have had ſome beauty, and a moderate fortune. Her elder ſiſter happened to marry a man of quality, and this ſeemed as a ſtatute of virginity againſt poor Jane. Becauſe there was one lucky hit in the family, ſhe was reſolved not to diſgrace it by introducing a tradeſman; by thus rejecting her equals, and neglected or deſpiſed by her ſuperiors, ſhe now acts in the capacity of tutoreſs to her ſiſter's children, and undergoes the drudgery of three ſervants, without receiving the wages of one.

"Miſs Squeeze was a pawn-broker's daughter; her father had early taught her that money was a very good thing, and left her a moderate fortune at his death. She was ſo perfectly ſenſible of the value of what ſhe had got, that ſhe was reſolved never to part with a farthing without an equality on the part of her ſuitor: ſhe thus refuſed ſeveral offers made her by people who wanted to better themſelves, as the ſaying is; and grew old and ill-natured, without ever conſidering that ſhe ſhould have made an abatement in her pretenſions, from her face being pale, and marked with the ſmall-pox.

"Lady Betty Tempeſt on the contrary had beauty, with fortune and family. But, fond of conqueſt, ſhe paſſed from triumph to triumph; ſhe had read

plays

plays and romances, and there had learned that a plain man of common ſenſe was no better than a fool; ſuch ſhe refuſed, and ſighed only for the gay, giddy, inconſtant, and thoughtleſs. After ſhe had thus rejected hundreds who liked her, and ſighed for hundreds who deſpiſed her, ſhe found herſelf inſenſibly deſerted: at preſent ſhe is company only for her aunts and couſins, and ſometimes makes one in a country dance, with only one of the chairs for a partner, caſt off round a joint-ſtool, and ſets to a corner cup-board. In a word, ſhe is treated with civil contempt from every quarter, and placed, like a piece of old faſhioned lumber, merely to fill up a corner.

"But Sophronia, the ſagacious Sophronia! how ſhall I mention her? She was taught to love Greek, and hate the men from her very infancy: ſhe has rejected fine gentlemen becauſe they were not pedants, and pedants, becauſe they were not fine gentlemen; her exquiſite ſenſibility has taught her to diſcover every fault in every lover, and her inflexible juſtice has prevented her pardoning them. Thus ſhe rejected ſeveral offers, till the wrinkles of age had overtaken her; and now, without one good feature in her face, ſhe talks inceſſantly of the beauties of the mind." Farewel.

LETTER

LETTER XXIX.

From the ſame.

WERE we to eſtimate the learning of the Engliſh by the number of books that are every day publiſhed among them, perhaps no country, not even China itſelf, could equal them in this particular. I have reckoned not leſs than twenty-three new books publiſhed in one day; which upon computation makes eight thouſand three hundred and ninety five in one year. Moſt of theſe are not confined to one ſingle ſcience, but embrace the whole circle. Hiſtory, politics, poetry, mathematics, metaphyſics and the philoſophy of nature, are all compriſed in a manual not larger than that in which our children are taught the letters. If then we ſuppoſe the learned of England to read but an eight part of the works which daily come from the preſs, (and ſure none can pretend to learning upon leſs eaſy terms) at this rate every ſcholar will read a thouſand books in one year. From ſuch a calculation you may conjecture what an amazing fund of literature a man muſt be poſſeſſed of, who thus reads three new books every day, not one of which

but

but contains all the good things that ever were ſaid or written.

And yet I know not how it happens, but the Engliſh are not in reality ſo learned as would ſeem from this calculation. We meet but few who know all arts and ſciences in perfection; whether it is that the generality are incapable of ſuch extenſive knowledge, or that the authors of thoſe books are not adequate inſtructors. In China, the emperor himſelf takes cognizance of all the doctors in the kingdom who profeſs anthorſhip. In England, every man may be an author that can write; for they have by law a liberty not only of ſaying what they pleaſe, but of being alſo as dull as they pleaſe.

Yeſterday I teſtified my ſurpriſe to the man in black, where writers could be found in ſufficient number to throw off the books I daily ſaw crowding from the preſs. I at firſt imagined that their learned ſeminaries might take this method of inſtructing the world; but to obviate this objection, my companion aſſured me, that the doctors of colleges never wrote, and that ſome of them had actually forgot their reading, "but if you deſire," continued he, "to ſee a collection of authors, I fancy

I can introduce you this evening to a club, which aſſembles every Saturday at ſeven, at the ſign of the Broom near Iſlington, to talk over the buſineſs of the laſt, and the entertainment of the week enſuing." I accepted his invitation; we walked together, and entered the houſe ſome time before the uſual hour for the company aſſembling.

My friend took this opportunity of letting me into the characters of the principal members of the club, not even the hoſt excepted, who, it ſeems, was once an author himſelf, but preferred by a bookſeller to this ſituation as a reward for his former ſervices.

"The firſt perſon," ſaid he, "of our ſociety, is Doctor Nonentity, a mataphyſician. Moſt people think him a profound ſcholar; but as he ſeldom ſpeaks, I cannot be poſitive in that particular; he generally ſpreads himſelf before the fire, ſucks his pipe, talks little, drinks much, and is reckoned very good company. I'm told he writes indexes to perfection, he makes eſſays on the origin of evil, philoſophical inquiries upon any ſubject, and draws up an anſwer to any book upon twenty-four hours warning. You may diſtinguiſh him from the reſt

of

of the company by his long grey wig, and the blue handkerchief round his neck.

"The next to him in merit and eſteem is Tim Syllabub, a droll creature; he ſometimes ſhines as a ſtar of the firſt magnitude among the choice ſpirits of the age; he is reckoned equally excellent at a rebus, a riddle, a baudy ſong, and an hymn for the tabernacle. You will know him by his ſhabby finery, his powdered wig, dirty ſhirt, and broken ſilk ſtockings.

"After him ſucceeds Mr Tibs, a very uſeful hand; he writes receipts for the bite of a mad dog, and throws off an eaſtern tale to perfection; he underſtands the buſineſs of an author as well as any man, for no bookſeller alive can cheat him: you may diſtinguiſh him by the peculiar clumſineſs of his figure and the coarſeneſs of his coat: However, though it be coarſe, (as he frequently tells the company) he has paid for it.

"Lawyer Squint is the politician of the ſociety; he makes ſpeeches for parliament, writes addreſſes to his fellow-ſubjects, and letters to noble commanders; he gives the hiſtory of every new play, and finds ſeaſonable thoughts upon every occaſion."

My companion was proceeding in his deſcription, when the hoſt came running in with terror on his countenance to tell us, that the door was beſet with bailiffs. "If that be the caſe, then," ſays my companion, "we had as good be going; for I am poſitive we ſhall not ſee one of the company this night." Wherefore, diſappointed, we were both obliged to return home, he to enjoy the oddities which compoſe his character alone, and I to write, as uſual, to my friend, the occurrences of the day. Adieu.

LETTER XXX.

From the ſame.

BY my laſt advices from Moſcow, I find the caravan has not yet departed for China: I ſtill continue to write, expecting that you may receive a large number of my letters at once. In them you will find rather a minute detail of Engliſh peculiarities, than a general picture of their manners or diſpoſition. Happy it were for mankind if all travellers would thus, inſtead of characteriſing a people in general terms, lead us into a detail of thoſe minute circumſtances which firſt influenced their opinion. The

genius

genius of a country ſhould be inveſtigated with a kind of experimental enquiry: by this means we ſhould have more preciſe and juſt notions of foreign nations, and detect travellers themſelves when they happened to form wrong concluſions.

My friend and I repeated our viſit to the club of authors; where, upon our entrance, we found the members all aſſembled, and engaged in a loud debate.

The poet, in ſhabby finery, holding a manuſcript in his hand, was earneſtly endeavouring to perſuade the company to hear him read the firſt book of an heroic poem, which he had compoſed the day before. But againſt this all the members very warmly objected. They knew no reaſon why any member of the club ſhould be indulged with a particular hearing, when many of them had publiſhed whole volumes which had never been looked in. They inſiſted that the law ſhould be obſerved, where reading in company was expreſsly noticed. It was in vain that the plaintiff pleaded the peculiar merit of his piece; he ſpoke to an aſſembly inſenſible to all remonſtrances; the book of laws was opened, and read by the ſecretary, where it was expreſsly enacted, "That whatſoever poet, ſpeech maker, critic,

or

or hiſtorian, ſhould preſume to engage the company by reading his own works, he was to lay down ſixpence previous to opening the manuſcript, and ſhould be charged one ſhilling an hour while he continued reading; the ſaid ſhilling to be equally diſtributed among the company as a recompence for their trouble."

Our poet ſeemed at firſt to ſhrink at the penalty, heſitating for ſome time whether he ſhould depoſit the fine, or ſhut up the poem; but looking round, and perceiving two ſtrangers in the room, his love of fame out-weighed his prudence, and laying down the ſum by law eſtabliſhed, he inſiſted on his prerogative.

A profound ſilence enſuing, he began by explaining his deſign. "Gentlemen," ſays he, "the preſent piece is not one of your common epic poems, which come from the preſs like paper-kites in ſummer; there are none of your Turnuſes or Didos in it; it is an heroical deſcription of nature. I only beg you'll endeavour to make your ſouls uniſon with mine, and hear with the ſame enthuſiaſm with which I have written. The poem begins with the deſcription of an author's bed chamber: the picture was ſketched in my own apartment; for you muſt know,

know, gentlemen, that I am myſelf the hero." Then putting himſelf into the attitude of an orator, with all the emphaſis of voice and action, he proceeded—

Where the Red Lion flaring o'er the way,
Invites each paſſing ſtranger that can pay;
Where Calvert's butt, and Parſon's black champaign,
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury lane;
There in a lonely room, from bailiffs ſnug,
The muſe found Scroggen ſtretch'd beneath a rug;
A window, patch'd with paper, lent a ray,
That dimly ſhew'd the ſtate in which he lay:
The ſanded floor that grits beneath the tread
The humid wall with paltry pictures ſpread;
The royal game of gooſe was there in view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew;
The ſeaſons fram'd with liſting found a place,
And brave Prince Wiliam ſhew'd his lamp-black face:
The morn was cold, he views with keen deſire
The ruſty grate unconſcious of a fire;
With beer and milk arrears the frieze was ſcor'd,
And five crack'd tea-cups dreſs'd the chimney board;
A night-cap deck'd his brows inſtead of bay,
A cap by night——a ſtocking all the day!

With

With this laſt line he ſeemed ſo much elated, that he was unable to proceed: "There, gentlemen," cries he, "there is a deſcription for you! Rabelais's bed chamber is but a fool to it.

A cap by night——a ſtocking all the day!

There is ſound, and ſenſe, and truth, and nature, in the trifling compaſs of ten little ſyllables."

He was too much employed in ſelf-admiration to obſerve the company; who by nods, winks, ſhrugs, and ſtifled laughter, teſtified every mark of contempt. He turned ſeverally to each for their opinion and found all, however, ready to applaud. One ſwore it was inimitable; another ſaid it was damn'd fine; and a third cried out in a rapture—*Cariſſimo!* At laſt, addreſſing himſelf to the preſident—"and pray, Mr Squint," ſays he, "let us have your opinion."—"Mine!" anſwered the preſident, taking the manuſcript out of the author's hands; "may this glaſs ſuffocate me, but I think it equal to any thing I have ſeen; and I fancy," continued he, doubling up the poem, and forcing it into the author's pocket, "that you will get great honour when it comes out; ſo I ſhall beg leave to put it in. We will not intrude upon your good nature, in deſiring

ring to hear more of it at preſent; *ex ungue Herculem*, we are ſatisfied, perfectly ſatisfied." The author made two or three attempts to pull it out a ſecond time, and the preſident made as many to prevent him. Thus, though with reluctance, he was at laſt obliged to ſit down, contented with the commendations for which he had paid.

When this tempeſt of poetry and praiſe was blown over, one of the company changed the ſubject, by wondering how any man could be ſo dull as to write poetry at preſent, ſince proſe itſelf would hardly pay. "Would you think it, gentlemen," continued he, "I have actually written laſt week, ſixteen prayers, twelve bawdy jeſts, and three ſermons, all at the rate of ſixpence a-piece; and what is ſtill more extraordinary, the bookſeller has loſt by the bargain. Such ſermons would once have gained me a prebend's ſtall; but now, alas! we have neither piety, taſte, nor humour, among us. Poſitively if this ſeaſon does not turn out better than it has begun, unleſs the miniſtry commit ſome blunders to furniſh us with a new topic of abuſe, I ſhall reſume my old buſineſs of working at the preſs, inſtead of finding it employment."

The whole club ſeemed to join in condemning the ſeaſon, as one of the worſt that had come for ſome time. A gentleman particularly obſerved, that the nobility were never known to ſubſcribe worſe than at preſent. "I know not how it happens," ſaid he; "though I follow them up as cloſe as poſſible, yet I can hardly get a ſingle ſubſcription in a week. The houſes of the great are as inacceſſible as a frontier garriſon at mid-night. I never ſee a a nobleman's door half opened, that ſome ſurly porter or footman does not ſtand full in the breach. I was yeſterday to wait with a ſubſcription propoſal upon my lord Squaſh the Creolian: I had poſted myſelf at his door the whole morning, and juſt as he was getting into his coach, thruſt my propoſal ſnug into his hand, folded up in the form of a letter from myſelf. He juſt glanced at the ſuperſcription, and not knowing the hand, conſigned it to his valet-de-chambre. This reſpectable perſonage treated it as his maſter, and put into the hands of the porter. The porter graſped my propoſal, frowning; and, meaſuring my figure from top to toe, put it back into my own hands unopened."

"To the devil I pitch all the nobility," cries a little man in a peculiar accent, "I am ſure they have of late uſed me moſt ſcurvily. You muſt know

know, gentlemen, ſome time ago, upon the arrival of a certain noble duke from his travels, I ſet myſelf down, and vamped up a fine flaunting, poetical panygeric, which I had written in ſuch a ſtrain, that I fancied it would have even wheedled milk from a mouſe. In this I repreſented the whole kingdom welcoming his grace to his native ſoil, not forgetting the loſs France and Italy would ſuſtain in their arts by his departure. I expected to touch for a bank bill at leaſt; ſo folding up my verſes in gilt-paper, I gave my laſt half-crown to a genteel ſervant to be the bearer. My letter was ſafely conveyed to his grace; and the ſervant after four hours abſence, during which time I led the life of a fiend, returned with a letter four times as big as mine. Gueſs my extaſy at the proſpect of ſo fine a return! I eagerly took the pacquet into my hands, that trembled to receive it. I kept it ſome time unopened before me, brooding over the expected treaſure it contained; when, opening it, as I hope to be ſaved, gentlemen, his grace had ſent me in payment for my poem, no bank bills, but ſix copies of verſe, each longer than mine, addreſſed to him upon the ſame occaſion."

"A nobleman," cries a member, who had hitherto been ſilent, "is created as much for the

confuſion of us authors, as the catch-pole. I'll tell you a ſtory, gentlemen, which is as true as that this pipe is made of clay. When I was delivered of my firſt book, I owed my taylor for a ſuit of cloaths; but that is nothing new, you know, and may be any man's caſe as well as mine. Well, owing him for a ſuit of cloaths, and hearing that my book took very well, he ſent for his money, and inſiſted upon being paid immediately: though I was at that time in fame, for my book run like wild-fire, yet I was very ſhort in money, and being unable to ſatisfy his demand, prudently reſolved to keep my chamber, preferring a priſon of my own chuſing at home, to one of my taylor's chuſing abroad. In vain the bailiffs uſed all their arts to decoy me from my citadel; in vain they ſent to let me know that a gentleman wanted to ſpeak with me at the next tavern; in vain they came with an urgent meſſage from my aunt in the country; in vain I was told that a particular friend was at the point of death, and deſired to take his laſt farewel; I was deaf, inſenſible, rock, adamant; the bailiffs could make no impreſſion on my hard heart, for I effectually kept my liberty by never ſtirring out of the room.

"This was very well for a fortnight; when one morning I received a moſt ſplendid meſſage from the

the Earl of Doomſday, importing that he had read my book, and was in raptures with every line of it; he impatiently longed to ſee the author, and had ſome deſigns which might turn out greatly to my advantage. I pauſed upon the contents of the meſſage, and found there could be no deceit, for the card was gilt at the edges, and the bearer, I was told, had quite the looks of a gentleman. Witneſs, ye powers, how my heart triumphed at my own importance! I ſaw a long perſpective felicity before me, I applauded the taſte of the times, which never ſaw genius forſaken; I had prepared a ſet introductory ſpeech for the occaſion, five glaring compliments for his lordſhip, and two more modeſt for myſelf. The next morning, therefore, in order to be punctual to my appointment, I took coach, and ordered the fellow to drive to the ſtreet and houſe mentioned in his lordſhip's addreſs. I had the precaution to pull up the windows as I went along to keep off the buſy part of mankind, and, big with expectation, fancied the coach never went faſt enough. At length, however, the wiſhed for moment of its ſtopping arrived; this for ſome time I impatiently expected; and, letting down the door in a tranſport, in order to take a previous view of his lordſhip's magnificent palace and ſituation, I found—poiſon to my ſight! I found myſelf, not in

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an elegant ſtreet, but a paltry lane; not at a nobleman's door, but the door of a ſpunging-houſe; I found the coachman had all this while been juſt driving me to jail, and I ſaw the bailiff with a devil's face coming out to ſecure me."

To a philoſopher, no circumſtance, however trifling, is too minute: he finds inſtruction and entertainment in occurrences, which are paſſed over by the reſt of mankind as low, trite, and indifferent; it is from the number of theſe particulars, which, to many, appear inſignificant, that he is at laſt enabled to form general concluſions; this, therefore, muſt be my excuſe for ſending ſo far as China, accounts of manners and follies, which, though minute in their own nature, ſerve more truly to characteriſe this people, than hiſtories of their public treaties, courts, miniſters, negotiations, and ambaſſadors. Adieu.

LETTER XXXI.

From the ſame.

THE Engliſh have not yet brought the art of gardening to the ſame perfection with the Chineſe, but

but have lately begun to imitate them. Nature is now followed with greater aſſiduity than formerly; the trees are ſuffered to ſhoot out into the utmoſt luxuriance; the ſtreams, no longer forced from their native beds, are permitted to wind along the vallies; ſpontaneous flowers take place of the finiſhed parterre, and the enamelled meadow of the ſhaven green.

Yet ſtill the Engliſh are far behind us in this charming art; their deſigners have not yet attained a power of uniting inſtruction with beauty. An European will ſcarcely conceive my meaning, when I ſay, that there is ſcarce a garden in China which does not contain ſome fine moral, couched under the general deſign, where one is not taught wiſdom as he walks, and feels the force of ſome noble truth, delicate precept, reſulting from the diſpoſition of the groves, ſtreams, or grottos. Permit me to illuſtrate what I mean by a deſcription of my gardens at Quamſi. My heart ſtill hovers round thoſe ſcenes of former happineſs with pleaſure; and I find a ſatisfaction in enjoying them at this diſtance, though but in imagination.

You deſcended from the houſe between two groves of trees, planted in ſuch a manner, that they

they were impenetrable to the eye; while on each hand the way was adorned with all that was beautiful in porcelane, ſtatuary, and painting. This paſſage from the houſe opened into an area ſurrounded with rocks, flowers, trees, and ſhrubs; but all ſo diſpoſed as if each was the ſpontaneous production of nature. As you proceeded forward on this lawn, to your right and left hand were two gates, oppoſite each other, of very different architecture and deſign; and before you lay a temple, built rather with minute elegance than oſtentation.

The right-hand gate was planned with the utmoſt ſimplicity, or rather rudeneſs; ivy claſped round the pillars, the baleful cypreſs hung over it; time ſeemed to have deſtroyed all the ſmoothneſs and regularity of the ſtone: two champions with lifted clubs appeared in the act of guarding it's acceſs; dragons and ſerpents were ſeen in the moſt hideous attitudes, to deter the ſpectator from approaching; and the perſpective view that lay behind, ſeemed dark and gloomy to the laſt degree; the ſtranger was tempted to enter only from the motto—PERVIA VIRTUTI.

The oppoſite gate was formed in a very different manner; the architecture was light, elegant, and inviting;

inviting; flowers hung in wreaths round the pillars; all was finiſhed in the moſt exact and maſterly manner; the very ſtone of which it was built, ſtill preſerved its poliſh; nymphs, wrought by the hand of a maſter, in the moſt alluring attitudes, beckoned the ſtranger to approach; while all that lay behind, as far as the eye could reach, ſeemed gay, luxuriant, and capable of affording endleſs pleaſure. The motto itſelf contributed to invite him, for over the gate was written theſe words—FACILIS DESENSUS.

By this time, I fancy, you begin to perceive that the gloomy gate was deſigned to repreſent the road to virtue; the oppoſite, the more agreeable paſſage to vice. It is but natural to ſuppoſe, that the ſpectator was always tempted to enter by the gate which offered him ſo many allurements; I always, in theſe caſes, left him to his choice; but generally found that he took to the left, which promiſed moſt entertainment.

Immediately upon his entering the gate of vice, the trees and flowers were diſpoſed in ſuch manner as to make the moſt pleaſing impreſſion; but as he walked farther on, he inſenſibly found the garden aſſume the air of a wilderneſs, the landſkips

began to darken, the paths grew more intricate, he appeared to go downwards, frightful rocks ſeemed to hang over his head, gloomy caverns, unexpected precipices, awful ruins, heaps of unburied bones, and terrifying ſounds, cauſed by unſeen waters, began to take place of what at firſt appeared ſo lovely: it was in vain to attempt returning; the labyrinth was too much perplexed for any but myſelf to find the way back. In ſhort, when ſufficiently impreſſed with the horrors of what he ſaw, and the imprudence of his choice I brought him by a hidden door, a ſhorter way back into the area from whence at firſt he had ſtrayed.

The gloomy gate now preſented itſelf before the ſtranger; and though there ſeemed little in its appearance to tempt his curioſity, yet encouraged by the motto, he generally proceeded. The darkneſs of the entrance, the frightful figures that ſeemed to obſtruct his way, the trees of a mournful green, conſpired at firſt to diſguſt him: as he went forward, however, all began to open and wear a more pleaſing appearance; beautiful caſcades, beds of flowers, trees loaded with fruit or bloſſoms, and unexpected brooks improved the ſcene; he now found that he was aſcending, and, as he proceeded,

all

all nature grew more beautiful, the proſpect widened as he went higher, even the air itſelf ſeemed to become more pure. Thus pleaſed, and happy from unexpected beauties, I at laſt led him to an arbour, from whence he could view the garden, and the whole country around, and where he might own, that the road to Virtue terminated in Happineſs.

Though from this deſcription you may imagine, that a vaſt tract of ground was neceſſary to exhibit ſuch a pleaſing variety in, yet be aſſured that I have ſeen ſeveral gardens in England take up ten times the ſpace which mine did, without half the beauty. A very ſmall extent of ground is enough, for an elegant taſte; the greater room is required if magnificence is in view. There is no ſpot, though ever ſo little, which a ſkilful deſigner might not thus improve, ſo as to convey a delicate allegory, and impreſs the mind with truths moſt uſeful and neceſſary. Adieu.

LETTER XXXII.

From the ſame.

IN a late excurſion with my friend into the country, a gentleman with a blue ribbon tied round his

ſhoulder, and in a chariot drawn by ſix horſes, paſſed ſwiftly by us, attended with a numerous train of captains, lacquies, and coaches filled with women. When we were recovered from the duſt raiſed by this cavalcade, and could continue our diſcourſe without danger of ſuffocation, I obſerved to my companion, that all this ſtate and equipage which he ſeemed to deſpiſe, would in China, be regarded with the utmoſt reverence, becauſe ſuch diſtinctions were always the reward of merit; the greatneſs of a Mandarine's retinue being a moſt certain mark of the ſuperiority of his abilities or virtue.

"The gentleman who has now paſſed us," replied my companion, "has no claims from his own merit to diſtinction; he is poſſeſſed neither of abilities nor virtue; it is enough for him that one of his anceſtors was poſſeſſed of theſe qualities two hundred years before him. There was a time, indeed, when his family deſerved their title, but they long ſince degenerated; and his anceſtors for more than a century have been more ſolicitous to keep up the breed for their dogs and horſes, than that of their children. This very nobleman, ſimple as he ſeems, is deſcended from a race of ſtateſmen and heroes; but unluckily his great grandfather marrying a cook-maid, and ſhe having a trifling

paſſion

paſſion for his lordſhip's groom, they ſomehow croſſed the ſtrain, and produced an heir, who took after his mother in his great love to good eating, and his father in a violent affection for horſe fleſh. Theſe paſſions have for ſome generations paſſed on from father to ſon, and are now become the characteriſtics of the family, his preſent lordſhip being equally remarkable for his kitchen and ſtable.

"But ſuch a nobleman," cried I, "deſerves our pity, thus placed in ſo high a ſphere of life, which only the more expoſes to contempt. A king may confer titles, but it is perſonal merit alone that inſures reſpect. I ſuppoſe," added I, "that ſuch men are deſpiſed by their equals, neglected by their inferiors, and condemned to live among involuntary dependents in irkſome ſolitude."

"You are ſtill under a miſtake," replied my companion; "for though this nobleman is a ſtranger to generoſity; though he takes twenty opportunities in a day of letting his gueſts know how much he deſpiſes them; though he is poſſeſſed neither of taſte, wit, nor wiſdom; though incapable of improving others by his converſation, and never known to enrich any by his bounty; yet for all this, his company is eagerly ſought after; he is a lord,

lord, and that is as much as moſt people deſire in a companion. Quality and title have ſuch allurements, that hundreds are ready to give up all their own importance, to cringe, to flatter, to look little, and to pall every pleaſure in conſtraint, merely to be among the great, though without the leaſt hopes of improving their underſtanding, or ſharing their generoſity; they might be happy among their equals, but thoſe are deſpiſed for company, where they are deſpiſed in turn. You ſaw what a crowd of humble couſins, card ruined beaus, and captains on half pay, were willing to make up this great man's retinue down to his country-ſeat. Not one of all theſe that could not lead a more comfortable life at home in their little lodging of three ſhillings a-week, with their lukewarm dinner, ſerved up between two pewter plates from a cook's ſhop. Yet, poor devils, they are willing to undergo the impertinence and pride of their entertainer, merely to be thought to live among the great; they are willing to paſs the ſummer in bondage, though conſcious they are taken down only to approve his lordſhip's taſte upon every occaſion, to tag all his ſtupid obſervations with a *very true*, to praiſe his table, and deſcant upon his claret and cookery.

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"The pitiful humiliations of the gentlemen you are now deſcribing," ſaid I, "puts me in mind of a cuſtom among the Tartars of Koreki, not entirely diſſimilar to this we are now conſidering *. The Ruſſians, who trade with them, carry thither a kind of muſhrooms, which they exchange for furs of ſquirrels, ermines, ſables, and foxes. Theſe muſhrooms the rich Tartars lay up in large quantities for the winter; and when a nobleman makes a muſhroom-feaſt, all the neighbours around are invited. The muſhrooms are prepared by boiling, by which the water acquires an intoxicating quality, and is a ſort of drink which the Tartars prize beyond all other. When the nobility and ladies are aſſembled, and the ceremonies uſual between people of diſtinction over, the muſhroom-broth goes freely round; they laugh, talk double entendre, grow fuddled, and become excellent company. The poorer ſort, who love muſhroom-broth to diſtraction as well as the rich, but cannot afford it at the firſt hand, poſt themſelves on theſe occaſions round the huts of the rich, and watch the opportunities of the ladies and gentlemen, as they come down to paſs their liquor, and holding a wooden bowl,

* Van Stralenberg, a writer of credit, gives the ſame account of this people. Vid. an Hiſt. Geograph. deſcription of the north eaſtern parts of Europe and Aſia, p. 397.

bowl, catch the delicious fluid, very little altered by filtration, being ſtill ſtrongly tinctured with the intoxicating quality. Of this they drink with the utmoſt ſatisfaction, and thus they get as drunk and as jovial as their betters."

"Happy nobility!" cries my companion, "who can fear no diminution of reſpect, unleſs by being ſeized with a ſtrangury; and who when moſt drunk are moſt uſeful: though we have not this cuſtom among us, I foreſee, that if it were introduced, we might have many a toad-eater in England ready to drink from the wooden bowl on thoſe occaſions, and to praiſe the flavour of his lordſhip's liquor. As we have different claſſes of gentry, who knows but we might ſee a lord holding the bowl to a miniſter, a knight holding it to his lordſhip, and a ſimple 'ſquire drinking it double diſtilled from the loins of knighthood! For my part, I ſhall never for the future hear a great man's flatterers haranguing in his praiſe, that I ſhall not fancy I behold the wooden bowl; for I can ſee no reaſon why a man, who can live eaſily and happily at home, ſhould bear the drudgery of decorum and the impertinence of his entertainer, unleſs intoxicated with a paſſion for all that was quality; unleſs he thought that whatever

whatever came from the great was delicious, and had the tincture of the muſhroom." Adieu.

LETTER XXXIII.

From the ſame.

I Am diſguſted, O Fum Hoam, even to ſickneſs diſguſted. Is it poſſible to bear the preſumption of thoſe iſlanders, when they pretend to inſtruct me in the ceremonies of China! They lay it down as a maxim, that every perſon that comes from thence, muſt expreſs himſelf in metaphor; ſwear by Alla, rail againſt wine, and behave and talk, and write, like a Turk or Perſian. They make no diſtinction between our elegant manners and the voluptuous barbarities of our eaſtern neighbours. Wherever I come, I raiſe either diffidence or aſtoniſhment: ſome fancy me no Chineſe, becauſe I am formed more like a man than a monſter; and others wonder to find one born five thouſand miles from England with common ſenſe. "Strange," ſay they, "that a man who has received his education at ſuch a diſtance from London, ſhould have common ſenſe! to be born in out of England, and yet have common ſenſe! impoſſible! He muſt be ſome Engliſhman

in diſguiſe; his very viſage has nothing of the true exotic barbarity."

I yeſterday received an invitation from a lady of diſtinction, who, it ſeems, had collected all her knowledge of eaſtern manners from fictions every day propagated here, under the titles of Eaſtern Tales, and Oriental Hiſtories: ſhe received me very politely, but ſeemed to wonder, that I neglected bringing opium and a tobbacco box. When chairs were drawn for the reſt of the company, I was aſſigned my place on a cuſhion on the floor. It was in vain that I proteſted the Chineſe uſed chairs as in Europe; ſhe underſtood decorum too well to entertain me with the ordinary civilities.

I had ſcarce been ſeated according to her directions, when the footman was ordered to pin a napkin under my chin. This I proteſted againſt, as being no way Chineſe; however, the whole company, who it ſeems were a club of connoiſſeurs, gave it unanimouſly againſt me, and the napkin was pinned accordingly.

It was impoſſible to be angry with people, who ſeemed to err only from an exceſs of politeneſs, and I ſat contented, expecting their importunities were

now

now at an end; but as ſoon as ever dinner was ſerved, the lady demanded whether I was for a plate of bears claws, or a ſlice of birds neſts? As theſe were diſhes with which I was utterly unacquainted, I was deſirous of eating only what I knew, and therefore begged to be helped to a piece of beef that lay on the ſide-table. My requeſt at once diſconcerted the whole company. A Chineſe eat beef! that could never be! there was no local propriety in Chineſe beef, whatever there might be in Chineſe pheaſant. "Sir," ſaid my entertainer, "I think I have ſome reaſons to fancy myſelf a judge of theſe matters: in ſhort the Chineſe never eat beef; ſo that I muſt be permitted to recommend the Pilaw, there was never better dreſſed at Pekin; the ſaffron and rice are well boiled, and the ſpices in perfection."

I had no ſooner begun to eat what was laid before me than I found the whole company as much aſtoniſhed as before; it ſeems I made no uſe of my chopſticks. A grave gentleman, whom I take to be an author, harangued very learnedly (as the company ſeemed to think) upon the uſe which was made of them in China: he entered into a long argument with himſelf about their firſt introduction, without once appealing to me, who might be ſuppoſed beſt capable of ſilencing the inquiry. As the

gentleman therefore took my ſilence for a mark of his own ſagacity, he was reſolved to purſue the triumph: he talked of our cities, mountains, and animals, as familiarly as if he had been born in Quamſi, but as erroneouſly as if a native of the moon; he attempted to prove that I had nothing of the true Chineſe cut in my viſage; ſhewed that my cheek bones ſhould have been higher, and my forehead broader; in ſhort, he almoſt reaſoned me out of my country, and effectually perſuaded the reſt of the company to be of his opinion.

I was going to expoſe his miſtakes, when it was inſiſted that I had nothing of the true eaſtern manner in my delivery. "This gentleman's converſation," ſays one of the ladies, who was a great reader, "is like our own, mere chit chat and common ſenſe. there is nothing like ſenſe in the true eaſtern ſtyle, where nothing more is required but ſublimity. Oh for an hiſtory of Aboulfaouris, the grand voyager; of genii, magicians, rocks, bags of bullets, giants, and enchanters, where all is great, obſcure, magnificent, and unintelligible!"—"I have written many a ſheet of eaſtern tales myſelf," interrupts the author; "and I defy the ſevereſt critic to ſay but that I have ſtuck cloſe to the true manner. I have compared a lady's chin to the ſnow upon

the mountain of Bomek; a ſoldier's ſword, to the clouds that obſcure the face of heaven. If riches are mentioned, I compare them to the flocks that graze the verdant Tafflis; if poverty, to the miſts that veil the brow of mount Baku. I have uſed *thee* and *thou* upon all occaſions; I have deſcribed fallen ſtars, and ſplitting mountains, not forgetting the little Houries who make a pretty figure in every deſcription. But you ſhall hear how I generally begin."—'Eben-benbolo, who was the ſon of Ban, was born on the foggy ſummits of Bender-abaſſi. His beard was whiter than the feathers which veil the breaſt of the penguin; his eyes were like the eyes of doves, when waſhed by the dews of the morning; his hair, which hung like the willow weeping over the glaſſy ſtream, was ſo beautiful that it ſeemed to reflect its own brightneſs; and his feet were as the feet of a wild deer which fleeth to the tops of the mountains.' "There, there, is the true eaſtern taſte for you! every advance made towards ſenſe, is only a deviation from ſound. Eaſtern tales ſhould always be ſonorous, lofty, muſical, and unmeaning."

I could not avoid ſmiling, to hear a native of England attempt to inſtruct me in the true eaſtern idiom; and after he had looked round ſome time for

for applauſe, I preſumed to aſk him whether he had ever travelled into the eaſt, to which he replied in the negative; I demanded whether he underſtood Chineſe or Arabic, to which he alſo anſwered as before. "Then how, Sir," ſaid I, "can you pretend to determine upon the eaſtern ſtile, who are entirely unacquainted with the eaſtern writings? Take, Sir, the word of one who is profeſſedly a Chineſe, and who is actually acquainted with the Arabian writers, that what is palmed upon you daily for an imitation an eaſtern writing, no ways reſembles their manner, either in ſentiment or diction. In the eaſt, ſimilies are ſeldom uſed, and metaphors almoſt wholly unknown; but in China particularly, the very reverſe of what you allude to, takes place; a cool phlegmatic method of writing prevails there. The writers of that country, ever more aſſiduous to inſtruct than to pleaſe, addreſs rather the judgment than the fancy. Unlike many authors of Europe, who have no conſideration of the reader's time, they generally leave more to be underſtood than they expreſs.

"Beſides, Sir, you muſt not expect from an inhabitant of China the ſame ignorance, the ſame unlettered ſimplicity, that you find in a Turk, Perſian, or native of Peru. The Chineſe are verſed in the

the ſciences as well as you, and are maſters of ſeveral arts unknown to the people of Europe. Many of them are inſtructed not only in their own national learning, but are perfectly well acquainted with the languages and learning of the weſt. If my word, in ſuch a caſe, is not to be taken, conſult your own travellers on this head, who affirm, that the ſcholars of Pekin and Siam ſuſtain theological theſes in Latin"—'The college of Maſprend, which is but a league from Siam,' ſays one of your travellers*, 'came in a body to ſalute our ambaſſador. Nothing gave me more ſincere pleaſure than to behold a number of prieſts, venerable both from age and modeſty, followed by a number of youths of all nations, Chineſe, Japaneſe, Tonquineſe, of Cohin, China, Pegu and Siam, all willing to pay their reſpects in the moſt polite manner imaginable. A Cohin Chineſe made an excellent Latin oration upon this occaſion: he was ſucceeded, and even outdone, by a ſtudent of Tonquin, who was as well ſkilled in the weſtern learning as any ſcholar of Paris.' "Now, Sir, if youths, who never ſtirred from home, are ſo perfectly ſkilled in your laws and learning, ſurely more muſt be expected from one

* Journal ou ſuite du Voyage de Siam, en forme de Lettres familiares, fait en 1685 & 1686, par M. L. D. C. pag. 174 edit. Amſtelod. 1686.

one like me, who have travelled ſo many thouſand miles, who have converſed familiarly for ſeveral years with the Engliſh factors eſtabliſhed at Canton, and the miſſionaries ſent us from every part of Europe. The unaffected of every country nearly reſemble each other, and a page of our Confucius and of your Tillotſon have ſcarce any material difference. Paltry affectation, ſtrained alluſions, and diſguſting finery attained by thoſe who chuſe to wear them; they are but too frequently the badges of ignorance, or of ſtupidity, whenever it would endeavour to pleaſe."

I was proceeding in my diſcourſe, when looking round, I perceived the company no way attentive to what I attempted, with ſo much earneſtneſs, to enforce. One lady was whiſpering her that ſat next; another, was ſtudying the merits of a fan; a third began to yawn; and the author himſelf fell faſt aſleep: I thought it, therefore, high time to make a retreat: nor did the company ſeem to ſhew any regret at my preparations for departure; even the lady who had invited me, with the moſt mortifying inſenſibility, ſaw me ſeize my hat, and riſe from my cuſhion; nor was I invited to repeat my viſit, becauſe it was found that I aimed at

appearing

appearing rather a reaſonable creature, than an outlandiſh ideot. Adieu.

LETTER XXXIV.

To the ſame.

THE polite arts are in this country ſubject to as many revolutions as its laws or politics; not only the objects of fancy and dreſs, but even of delicacy and taſte, are directed by the capricious influence of faſhion. I am told there has been a time when poetry was univerſally encouraged by the great, when men of the firſt rank not only patronized the poet, but produced the fineſt models for his imitation; it was then that the Engliſh ſent forth thoſe glowing rhapſodies, which we have ſo often read over together with rapture; poems big with all the ſublimity of Mentius, and ſupported by reaſoning as ſtrong as that of Zimpo.

The nobility are ever fond of wiſdom, but they alſo are fond of having it without ſtudy; to read poetry required thought, and the Engliſh nobility were not fond of thinking; they ſoon therefore

placed their affections upon muſic, becauſe in this they might indulge an happy vacancy, and yet ſtill have pretenſions to delicacy and taſte as before. They ſoon brought their numerous dependents into an approbation of their pleaſures; who in turn led their thouſand imitators to feel or feign a ſimilitude of paſſion. Colonies of ſingers were now imported from abroad at a vaſt expence, and it was expected the Engliſh would ſoon be able to ſet examples to Europe: all theſe expectations, however, were ſoon diſſipated; in ſpite of the zeal which fired the great, the ignorant vulgar refuſed to be taught to ſing; and refuſed to undergo the ceremonies which were to initiate them in the ſinging fraternity. Thus the colony from abroad dwindled by degrees; for they were of themſelves unfortunately incapable of propagating the breed.

Muſic having thus loſt its ſplendour, painting is now become the ſole object of faſhionable care; the title of connoiſſeur in that art is at preſent the ſafeſt paſſport, to every faſhionable ſociety; a well timed ſhrug, an admiring attitude, and one or two exotic tones of exclamation, are ſufficient qualifications for men of low circumſtances to curry favour; even ſome of the young nobility are themſelves early inſtructed in handling the pencil, while, their happy parents,

parents, big with expectation, foreſee the walls of every apartment covered with the manufactures of their poſterity.

But many of the Engliſh are not content with giving all their time to this art at home; ſome young men of diſtinction are found to travel through Europe, with no other intent, than that of underſtanding and collecting pictures, ſtudying ſeals, and deſcribing ſtatues; on they travel from this cabinet of curioſities to that gallery of pictures; waſte the prime of life in wonder, ſkilful in pictures, ignorant in men; yet impoſſible to be reclaimed, becauſe their follies take ſhelter under the names of delicacy and taſte.

It is true, painting ſhould have due encouragement, as the painter can undoubtedly fit up our apartments in a much more elegant manner than the upholſterer; but I ſhould think a man of faſhion makes but an indifferent exchange, who lays out all that time in furniſhing his houſe, which he ſhould have employed in the furniture of his head; a perſon who ſhews no other ſymptoms of taſte then his cabinet or gallery, might as well boaſt to me of the furniture of his kitchen.

I know no other motive but vanity that induces the great to teſtify ſuch an inordinate paſſion for pictures; after the piece is bought, and gazed at eight or ten days ſucceſſively, the purchaſer's pleaſure muſt ſurely be over; all the ſatisfaction he can then have, is to ſhew it to others: he may be conſidered as the guardian of a treaſure of which he makes no manner of uſe; his gallery is furniſhed not for himſelf, but the connoiſſeur, who is generally ſome humble flatterer, ready to feign a rapture he does not feel; and as neceſſary to the happineſs of a picture buyer, as gazers are to the magnificence of an Aſiatic proceſſion.

I have incloſed a letter from a youth of diſtinction, on his travels, to his father in England; in which he appears addicted to no vice, ſeems obedient to his governor, of a good natural diſpoſition, and fond of improvement; but at the ſame time early taught to regard cabinets and galleries as the only proper ſchools of improvement, and to conſider a ſkill in pictures as the propereſt knowledge for a man of quality.

My Lord,

We have been but two days at Antwerp; wherefore I have ſat down as ſoon as poſſible to give you ſome

ſome account of what we have ſeen ſince our arrival, deſirous of letting no opportunity paſs without writing to ſo good a father. Immediately upon alighting from our Rotterdam machine, my governor, who is immoderately fond of paintings, and at the ſame time an excellent judge, would let no time paſs till we paid our reſpects to the church of the virgin mother, which contains treaſure beyond eſtimation. We took an infinity of pains in knowing its exact dimenſions, and differed half a foot in our calculation; ſo I leave that to ſome ſucceeding information. I really believe my governor and I could have lived and died there. There is ſcarce a pillar in the whole church that is not adorned by a Reubens, a Vander Meuylen, a Vandyke, or a Woverman. What attitudes, carnations, and draperies! I am almoſt induced to pity the Engliſh, who have none of theſe exquiſite pieces among them. As we were willing to let ſlip no opportunity of doing buſineſs, we immediately after went to wait on Mr Hogendorp, whom you have ſo frequently commended for his judicious collection. His Cameas are indeed beyond price; his intaglios not ſo good. He ſhewed us one of an officiating flamen, which he thought to be an antique; but my governor, who is not to be deceived in theſe particulars, ſoon found it to be an arrant *cinque cento*. I could

not

not, however, ſufficiently admire the genius of Mr Hogendorp, who has been able to collect from all parts of the world a thouſand things which no body knows the uſe of. Except your lordſhip and my governor, I do not know any body I admire ſo much. He is indeed a ſurpriſing genius. The next morning early, as we were reſolved to take the whole day before us, we ſent our compliments to Mr Van Sprocken, deſiring to ſee his gallery, which requeſt he very politely complied with. His gallery meaſures fifty feet by twenty, and is well filled; but what ſurpriſed me moſt of all, was to ſee an holy family juſt like your lordſhip's, which this ingenious gentleman aſſures me is the true original. I own this gave me inexpreſſible uneaſineſs, and I fear it will to your lordſhip, as I had flattered myſelf, that the only original was in your lordſhip's poſſeſſion; I would adviſe you, however, to take your's down till its merit can be aſcertained, my governor aſſuring me, that he intends to write a long diſſertation to prove its originality. One might ſtudy in this city for ages, and ſtill find ſomething new: we went from this to view the cardinal's ſtatues, which are really very fine; there were three ſpintria executed in a very maſterly manner, all arm in arm. The torſe which I heard you talk ſo much of, is at laſt diſcovered to be a Hercules

cules ſpinning, and not a Cleopatra bathing, as your lordſhip had conjectured: there has been a treatiſe written to prove it.

My Lord Firmly is certainly a Goth, a Vandal, no taſte in the world for painting. I wonder how any call him a man of taſte. Paſſing through the ſtreets of Antwerp a few days ago, and obſerving the nakedneſs of the inhabitants, he was ſo barbarous as to obſerve, that he thought the beſt method the Flemings could take, was to ſell their pictures and buy cloaths. Ah, Cogline! We ſhall go to-morrow to Mr Carwarden's cabinet, and the next day we ſhall ſee the curioſities collected by Van Ran, and the day after we ſhall pay a viſit to Mount Calvary, and after that—but I find my paper finiſhed; ſo with the moſt ſincere wiſhes for your lordſhip's happineſs, and with hopes, after having ſeen Italy, that centre of pleaſure, to return home worthy the care and expence which has been generouſly laid out in my improvement.

I remain, my Lord, your's, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XXXV.

From HINGPO, *a ſlave in* PERSIA, *to* ALTANGI *a travelling philoſopher of* CHINA, *by the way of* MOSCOW.

FORTUNE has made me the ſlave of another, but nature and inclination render me entirely ſubſervient to you; a tyrant commands my body, but you are maſter of my heart. And yet, let not thy inflexible nature condemn me, when I confeſs that I find my ſoul ſhrink with my circumſtances. I feel my mind, not leſs than my body, bend beneath the rigours of ſervitude; the maſter whom I ſerve grows every day more formidable. In ſpite of reaſon, which ſhould teach me to deſpiſe him, his hideous image fills even my dreams with horror.

A few days ago a Chriſtian ſlave, who wrought in the gardens, happening to enter an arbour where the tyrant was entertaining the ladies of his Haram with coffee, the unhappy captive was inſtantly ſtabbed to the heart for his intruſion. I have been preferred to his place; which, though leſs laborious than my former ſtation, is yet more ungratefel

grateful, as it brings me nearer him whoſe preſence excites ſenſations at once of diſguſt and apprehenſion.

Into what a ſtate of miſery are the modern Perſians fallen! A nation famous for ſetting the world an example of freedom, is now become a land of tyrants, and a den of ſlaves. The houſeleſs Tartar of Kamkatſka, who enjoys his herbs and his fiſh in unmoleſted freedom, may be envied, if compared to the thouſands who pine here in hopeleſs ſervitude, and curſe the day that gave them being. Is this juſt dealing, Heaven! to render millions wretched to ſwell up the happineſs of a few? cannot the powerful of this earth be happy without our ſighs and tears? muſt every luxury of the great be woven from the calamities of the poor? It muſt, it muſt ſurely be, that this jarring diſcordant life is but the prelude to ſome future harmony; the ſoul attuned to virtue here, ſhall go from hence to fill up the univerſal choir where Tien preſides in perſon, where there ſhall be no tyrants to frown, no ſhackles to bind, nor no whips to threaten; where I ſhall once more meet my father with rapture, and give a looſe to filial piety; where I ſhall hang on his neck, and hear the wiſdom of his lips, and thank him for all the happineſs to which he has introduced me.

The wretch whom fortune has made my maſter, has lately purchaſed ſeveral ſlaves of both ſexes; among the reſt, I hear a Chriſtian captive talked of with admiration. The eunuch who bought her, and who is accuſtomed to ſurvey beauty with indifference, ſpeaks of her with emotion? Her pride, however aſtoniſhes her attendant ſlaves not leſs than her beauty: it is reported that ſhe refuſes the warmeſt ſolicitations of her haughty lord; he has even offered to make her one of his four wives upon changing her religion, and conforming to his. It is probable ſhe cannot refuſe ſuch extraordinary offers, and her delay is perhaps intended to enhance her favours.

I have juſt now ſeen her; ſhe inadvertently approached the place without a veil, where I ſat waiting. She ſeemed to regard the heavens alone with fixed attention: there her moſt ardent gaze was directed. Genius of the ſun! what unexpected ſoftneſs! what animated grace! her beauty ſeemed the tranſparent covering of virtue. Celeſtial beings could not wear a look of more perfection, while ſorrow humanized her form, and mixed my admiration with pity. I roſe from the bank on which I ſat, and ſhe retired; happy that none obſerved us, for ſuch an interview might have been fatal.

I have

I have regarded, till now, the opulence and the power of my tyrant without envy; I ſaw him with a mind incapable of enjoying the gifts of fortune, and conſequently regarded him as one loaded, rather than enriched, with its favours. But at preſent, when I think that ſo much beauty is reſerved only for him, that ſo many charms ſhall be laviſhed on a wretch incapable of feeling the greatneſs of the bleſſing, I own I feel a reluctance to which I have hitherto been a ſtranger.

But let not my father impute theſe uneaſy ſenſations to ſo triſling a cauſe as love. No, never let it be thought, that your ſon, and the pupil of the wiſe Fum Hoam, could ſtoop to ſo degrading a paſſion. I am only diſpleaſed at ſeeing ſo much excellence ſo unjuſtly diſpoſed of.

The uneaſineſs which I feel is not for myſelf, but for the beautiful Chriſtian. When I reflected on the barbarity of him for whom ſhe is deſigned, I pity, indeed I pity her. When I think that ſhe muſt only ſhare one heart, who deſerves to command a thouſand, excuſe me, I if feel an emotion, which univerſal benevolence extorts from me. As I am convinced that you take a pleaſure in thoſe ſallies of humanity, and are particularly pleaſed with

compaſſion, I could not avoid diſcovering the ſenſibility with which I felt this beautiful ſtranger's diſtreſs. I have for a while forgot, in her's, the miſeries of my own hopeleſs ſituation. The tyrant grows every day more ſevere; and love, which ſoftens all other minds into tenderneſs, ſeems only to have increaſed his ſeverity. Adieu.

LETTER XXXVI.

From the ſame.

THE whole Haram is filled with a tumultuous joy; Zelis, the beautiful captive, has conſented to embrace the religion of Mahomet, and become one of the wives of the faſtidious Perſian. It is impoſſible to deſcribe the tranſport that ſits on every face on this occaſion. Muſic and feaſting fill every apartment; the moſt miſerable ſlave ſeems to forget his chains, and ſympathizes with the happineſs of Moſtadad. The herb we tread beneath our feet is not made more for our uſe, than every ſlave around him for their imperious maſter; mere machines of obedience, they wait with ſilent aſſiduity, feel his pains,

pains, and rejoice in his exultation. Heavens! how much is requiſite to make one man happy!

Twelve of the moſt beautiful ſlaves, and I among the number, have got orders to prepare for carrying him in triumph to the bridal apartment. The blaze of perfumed torches are to imitate the day; the dancers and ſingers are hired at a vaſt expence. The nuptials are to be celebrated on the approaching feaſt of Barboura, when an hundred taels in gold are to be diſtributed among the barren wives, in order to pray for fertility from the approaching union.

What will not riches procure! an hundred domeſtics, who curſe the tyrant in their ſouls, are commanded to wear a face of joy, and they are joyful. An hundred flatterers are ordered to attend, and they fill his ears with praiſe. Beauty, all-commanding beauty, ſues for admittance, and ſcarcely receives an anſwer; even love itſelf ſeems to wait upon fortune, or though the paſſion be only feigned, yet it wears every appearance of ſincerity; and what greater pleaſure can even true ſincerity confer, or what would the rich have more?

Nothing can exceed the intended magnificence of the bridegroom, but the coſtly dreſſes of the bride;

bride; ſix eunuchs, in the moſt ſumptuous habits, are to conduct him to the nuptial couch, and wait his orders. Six ladies, in all the magnificence of Perſia, are directed to undreſs the bride. Their buſineſs is to aſſiſt, to encourage her, to diveſt her of every encumbering part of her dreſs, all but the laſt covering, which, by an artful complication of ribbons, is purpoſely made difficult to unlooſe, and with which ſhe is to part reluctantly even to the joyful poſſeſſor of her beauty.

Moſtadad, O my father, is no philoſopher; and yet he ſeems perfectly contented with ignorance. Poſſeſſed of numberleſs ſlaves, camels, and women, he deſires no greater poſſeſſion. He never opened the page of Mentius, and yet all the ſlaves tell me that he is happy.

Forgive the weakneſs of my nature, if I ſometimes feel my heart rebellious to the dictates of wiſdom, and eager for happineſs like his. Yet, why wiſh for his wealth with his ignorance? to be like him, incapable of ſentimental pleaſures, incapable of feeling the happineſs of making others happy, incapable of teaching the beautiful Zelis philoſophy.

What

What ſhall I in a tranſport of paſſion give up the golden mean, the univerſal harmony, the unchanging eſſence, for the poſſeſſion of an hundred camels, as many ſlaves, thirty-five beautiful horſes, and ſeventy-three fine women? firſt blaſt me to the centre! Degrade me beneath the moſt degraded! Pare my nails, ye powers of heaven! ere I would ſtoop to ſuch an exchange. What, part with philoſophy, which teaches me to ſuppreſs my paſſions inſtead of gratifying them, which teaches me even to diveſt my ſoul of paſſion, which teaches ſerenity in the midſt of tortures; philoſophy, by which even now I am ſo very ſerene, and ſo very much at eaſe, to be perſuaded to part with it for any other enjoyment! Never, never, even though perſuaſion ſpoke in the accents of Zelis!

A female ſlave informs me, that the bride is to be arrayed in a tiſſue of ſilver, and her hair adorned with largeſt pearls of Ormus: but why teize you with particulars, in which we both are ſo little concerned; the pain I feel in ſeparation throws a gloom over my mind, which in this ſcene of univerſal joy I fear may be attributed to ſome other cauſe. How wretched are thoſe who are, like me, denied even the laſt reſource of miſery, their tears! Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVII.

From the ſame.

I Begin to have doubts whether wiſdom be alone ſufficient to make us happy. Whether every ſtep we make in refinement is not an inlet into new diſquietudes. A mind too vigorous and active, ſerves only to conſume the body to which it is joined, as the richeſt jewels are ſooneſt found to wear their ſettings.

When we riſe in knowledge, as the proſpect widens, the objects of our regard become more obſcure; and the unlettered peaſant, whoſe views are only directed to the narrow ſphere around him, beholds nature with a finer reliſh, and taſtes her bleſſings with a keener appetite, than the philoſopher, whoſe mind attempts to graſp an univerſal ſyſtem.

As I was ſome days ago purſuing this ſubject among a circle of my fellow ſlaves, an ancient Guebre of the number, equally remarkable for his piety and wiſdom, ſeemed touched with my converſation, and deſired to illuſtrate what I had been ſaying with an allegory taken from the Zendaveſta of Zoroaſter;

roaſter: "by this we ſhall be taught," ſays he, "that they who travel in purſuit of wiſdom, walk only in a circle; and after all their labour, at laſt return to their priſtine ignorance; and in this alſo we ſhall ſee, that enthuſiaſtic confidence, or unſatisfying doubts, terminate all our inquiries.

"In early times, before myriads of nations covered the earth, the whole human race lived together in one valley. The ſimple inhabitants, ſurrounded on every ſide by lofty mountains, knew no other world but the little ſpot on which they were confined. They fancied the heavens bent down to meet the mountain tops, and formed an impenetrable wall to ſurround them. None had ever yet ventured to climb the ſteepy cliff, in order to explore thoſe regions that lay beyond it; they knew the nature of the ſkies only from a tradition, which mentioned their being made of adamant; traditions make up the reaſonings of the ſimple, and ſerve to ſilence every inquiry.

"In this ſequeſtered vale, bleſſed with all the ſpontaneous productions of nature, the honeyed bloſſom, the refreſhing breeze, the gliding brook, and golden fruitage, the ſimple inhabitants ſeemed

happy in themſelves, in each other; they deſired no greater pleaſures, for they knew of none greater; ambition, pride, and envy, were vices unknown among them; and from this peculiar ſimplicity of its poſſeſſors, the country was called *the valley of Ignorance*.

"At length, however, an unhappy youth, more aſpiring than the reſt, undertook to climb the mountain's ſide, and examine the ſummits which were hitherto deemed inacceſſible. The inhabitants from below gazed with wonder at his intrepidity; ſome applauded his courage, others cenſured his folly; ſtill, however, he proceeded towards the place where the earth and heavens ſeemed to unite, and at length arrived at the wiſhed for height with extreme labour and aſſiduity.

"His firſt ſurpriſe was to find the ſkies, not, as he expected, within his reach, but ſtill as far off as before; his amazement increaſed when he ſaw a wide extended region lying on the oppoſite ſide of the mountain; but it roſe to aſtoniſhment when he beheld a country at a diſtance more beautiful and alluring than even that he had juſt left behind.

"As

"As he continued to gaze with wonder, a genius, with a look of infinite modeſty, approaching, offered to be his guide and inſtructor. 'The diſtant country which you ſo much admire,' ſays the angelic being, 'is called *the Land of Certainty;* in that charming retreat, ſentiment contributes to refine every ſenſual banquet; the inhabitants are bleſſed with every ſolid enjoyment, and ſtill more bleſſed in a perfect conſciouſneſs of their own felicity; ignorance in that country is wholly unknown; all there is ſatisfaction without allay, for every pleaſure firſt undergoes the examination of reaſon. As for me, I am called *the genius of Demonſtration*, and am ſtationed here in order to conduct every adventurer to that land of happineſs through thoſe intervening regions you ſee over-hung with fogs and darkneſs, and horrid with foreſts, cataracts, caverns, and various other ſhapes of danger. But follow me, and in time I may lead you to that diſtant deſirable land of tranquillity.'

"The intrepid traveller immediately put himſelf under the direction of the genius, and both journeying on together with a ſlow but agreeable pace, deceived the tedioufneſs of the way by converſation. The beginning of the journey ſeemed to promiſe true ſatisfaction; but as they proceeded

forward, the ſkies became more gloomy, and the way more intricate; they often inadvertently approached the brow of ſome frightful precipice, or the brink of a torrent, and were obliged to meaſure back their former way: the gloom increaſing as they proceeded, their pace became more ſlow; they pauſed at every ſtep, frequently ſtumbled, and their diſtruſt and timidity increaſed. The genius of Demonſtration, now, therefore, adviſed his pupil to grope upon hands and feet, as a method, though more ſlow, yet leſs liable to error.

"In this manner they attempted to purſue their journey for ſome time, when they were overtaken by another genius, who, with a precipitate pace, ſeemed travelliug the ſame way. He was inſtantly known by the other to be *the genius of Probability*. He wore two wide extended wings at his back, which inceſſantly waved, without increaſing the rapidity of his motion; his countenance betrayed a confidence that the ignorant might miſtake for ſincerity, and he had but one eye, which was fixed in the middle of his forehead."

'Servant of Hormizda,' cried he, approaching the mortal pilgrim, 'if thou art travelling to the *Land of Certainty*, how is it poſſible to arrive there under

under the guidance of a genius, who proceeds forward ſo ſlowly, and is ſo little acquainted with the way? follow me, we ſhall ſoon perform the journey where every pleaſure awaits our arrival.'

"The peremptory tone in which this genius ſpoke, and the ſpeed with which he moved forward, induced the traveller to change his conductor; and leaving his modeſt companion behind, he proceeded forward with his more confident director, ſeeming not a little pleaſed at the increaſed velocity of his motion.

"But ſoon he found reaſons to repent. Whenever a torrent croſſed their way, his guide taught him to deſpiſe the obſtacle by plunging him in; whenever a precipice preſented, he was directed to fling himſelf forward. Thus each moment miraculouſly eſcaping, his repeated eſcapes only ſerved to encreaſe his temerity. He led him, therefore, forward, amidſt infinite difficulties, till they arrived at the borders of an ocean which appeared unnavigable from the black miſts that lay upon its ſurface. Its unquiet waves were of the darkeſt hue, and gave a lively repreſentation of the various agitations of the human mind.

"The

"The genius of Probability now confeſſed his temerity, owned his being an improper guide to the *Land of Certainty*, a country where no mortal had ever been permitted to arrive; but at the ſame time offered to ſupply the traveller with another conductor, who ſhould carry him to *the Land of Confidence;* a region where the inhabitants lived with the utmoſt tranquillity, and taſted almoſt as much ſatisfaction as if in the Land of Certainty. Not waiting for a reply, he ſtamped three times on the ground, and called forth *the Dæmon of Error*, a gloomy fiend of the ſervants of Arimanes. The yawning earth gave up the reluctant ſavage, who ſeemed unable to bear the light of day. His ſtature was enormous, his colour black and hideous, his aſpect betrayed a thouſand varying paſſions, and he ſpread forth pinions that were fitted for the moſt rapid flight. The traveller at firſt was ſhocked at the ſpectre; but finding him obedient to ſuperior power, he aſſumed his former tranquillity."

'I have called you to duty,' cries the genius to the dæmon, 'to bear on your back a ſon of mortality over *the Ocean of Doubts*, into *the Land of Confidence.* I expect you'll perform your commiſſion with punctuality. And as for you,' continued the genius, addreſſing the traveller, 'when once I have

have bound this fillet round your eyes, let no voice of perſuaſion, nor threats the moſt terrifying, perſuade you to unbind it in order to look round; keep the fillet faſt, look not at the ocean below, and you may certainly expect to arrive at a region of pleaſure.'

"Thus ſaying, and the traveller's eyes being covered, the dæmon muttering curſes, raiſed him on his back, and inſtantly up-borne by his ſtrong pinions, directed his flight among the clouds. Neither the loudeſt thunder, nor the moſt angry tempeſt, could perſuade the traveller to unbind his eyes. The dæmon directed his flight downwards, and ſkimmed the ſurface of the ocean; a thouſand voices, ſome with loud invectives, others in the ſarcaſtic tones of contempt, vainly endeavoured to perſuade him to look round; but he ſtill continued to keep his eyes covered, and would in all probability have arrived at the happy land, had not flattery effected what other means could not perform. For now he heard himſelf welcomed on every ſide to the promiſed land, and an univerſal ſhout of joy was ſent forth at his ſafe arrival; the wearied traveller, deſirous of ſeeing the long wiſhed for country, at length pulled the fillet from his eyes, and ventured to look round him. But he had

had unlooſed the band too ſoon; he was not yet above half way over. The dæmon, who was ſtill hovering in the air, and had produced thoſe ſounds only in order to deceive, was now freed from his commiſſion; wherefore throwing the aſtoniſhed traveller from his back, the unhappy youth fell headlong into the ſubjacent Ocean of Doubts, from whence he never after was ſeen to ariſe."

LETTER XXXVIII.

From LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *to* FUM HOAM, *firſt Preſident of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

WHEN Parmenio, the Grecian, had done ſomething which excited an univerſal ſhout from the ſurrounding multitude, he was inſtantly ſtruck with the doubt, that what had their approbation muſt certainly be wrong; and turning to a philoſopher who ſtood near him—"Pray, Sir," ſays he, "parpon me; I fear I have been guilty of ſome abſurdity"

You

You know that I am not leſs than him a deſpiſer of the multitude; you know that I equally deteſt flattery to the great; yet ſo many circumſtances have concurred to give a luſtre to the latter part of the preſent Engliſh monarch's reign, that I cannot withhold my contribution of praiſe; I cannot avoid the acknowledging the crowd for once juſt in their unanimous approbation.

Yet think not that battles gained, dominion extended, or enemies brought to ſubmiſſion, are the virtues which at preſent claim my admiration. Were the reigning monarch only famous for his victories, I ſhould regard his character with indifference: the boaſt of heroiſm in this enlightened age is juſtly regarded as a qualification of a very ſubordinate rank, and mankind now begin to look with becoming horror on theſe foes to man; the virtue in this aged monarch which I have at preſent in view, is one of a much more exalted nature, is one of the moſt difficult of attainment, is the leaſt praiſed of all kingly virtues, and yet deſerves the greateſt praiſe: the virtue I mean is JUSTICE; a ſtrict adminiſtration of juſtice, without ſeverity and without favour.

Of all virtues this is the moſt difficult to be practiſed by a king who has a power to pardon. All men, even tyrants themſelves, lean to mercy, when unbiaſſed by paſſions or intereſt; the heart naturally perſuades to forgiveneſs, and purſuing the dictates of this pleaſing deceiver, we are led to prefer our private ſatisfaction to public utility. What a thorough love for the public, what a ſtrong command over the paſſions, what a finely conducted judgment, muſt he poſſeſs who oppoſes the dictates of reaſon to thoſe of his heart, and prefers the future intereſt of his people to his own immediate ſatisfaction!

If ſtill to a man's own natural bias for tenderneſs, we add the numerous ſolicitations made by a criminal's friends for mercy; if we ſurvey a king not only oppoſing his own feelings, but reluctantly refuſing thoſe he regards, and this to ſatisfy the public, whoſe cries he may never hear, whoſe gratitude he may never receive; this ſurely is true greatneſs! Let us fancy ourſelves for a moment in this juſt old man's place, ſurrounded by numbers, all ſoliciting the ſame favour, a favour that nature diſpoſes us to grant, where the inducements to pity are laid before us in the ſtrongeſt light, ſuppliants at our feet, ſome ready to reſent a refuſal, none

oppoſing

oppoſing a compliance; let us, I ſay, ſuppoſe ourſelves in ſuch a ſituation, and I fancy we ſhould find ourſelves more apt to act the character of good-natured men than of upright magiſtrates.

What contributes to raiſe juſtice above all other kingly virtues is, that it is ſeldom attended with a due ſhare of applauſe, and thoſe who practiſe it muſt be influenced by greater motives than empty fame. The people are generally well pleaſed with a remiſſion of puniſhment, and all that wears the appearance of humanity; it is the wiſe alone who are capable of diſcerning that impartial juſtice is the trueſt mercy: they know it to be very difficult, at once to compaſſionate, and yet condemn an object that pleads for tenderneſs.

I have been led into this common-place train of thought by a late ſtriking inſtance in this country of the impartiality of juſtice, and of the king's inflexible reſolution of inflicting puniſhment where it was juſtly due. A man of the firſt quality, in a fit either of paſſion, melancholy, or madneſs, murdered his ſervant: it was expected that his ſtation in life would have leſſened the ignominy of his puniſhment; however, he was arraigned, condemned, and underwent the ſame degrading death with

the meaneſt malefactor. It was well conſidered that virtue alone is true nobility; and that he whoſe actions ſink him even beneath the vulgar, has no right to thoſe diſtinctions which ſhould be the rewards only of merit; it was perhaps conſidered that crimes were more heinous among the higher claſſes of people, as neceſſity expoſes them to fewer temptations.

Over all the eaſt, even China not excepted, a perſon of the ſame quality guilty of ſuch a crime, might, by giving up a ſhare of his fortune to the judge, buy off his ſentence. There are ſeveral countries even in Europe, where the ſervant is entirely the property of his maſter; if a ſlave kills his lord, he dies by the moſt excruciating tortures; but if the circumſtances are reverſed, a ſmall fine buys off the puniſhment of the offender. Happy the country where all are equal, and where thoſe who ſit as judges have too much integrity to receive a bribe, and too much honour to pity from a ſimilitude of the priſoner's title or circumſtances with their own! Such is England. Yet think not that it was always equally famed for this ſtrict impartiality. There was a time even here when titles ſoftened the rigours of the law, when dignified wretches

wretches were ſuffered to live, and continue for years an equal diſgrace to juſtice and nobility.

To this day, in a neighbouring country, the great are often moſt ſcandalouſly pardoned for the moſt ſcandalous offences. A perſon is ſtill alive among them who has more than once deſerved the moſt ignominious ſeverity of juſtice. His being of the blood royal, however, was thought a ſufficient atonement for his being a diſgrace to humanity. This remarkable perſonage took pleaſure in ſhooting at the paſſengers below, from the top of his palace; and in this moſt princely amuſement he uſually ſpent ſome time every day. He was at length arraigned by the friends of a perſon, whom in this manner he had killed, was found guilty of the charge, and condemned to die. His merciful monarch pardoned him in conſideration of his rank and quality. The unrepenting criminal ſoon after renewed his uſual entertainment, and in the ſame manner killed another man. He was a ſecond time condemned; and, ſtrange to think, a ſecond time received his majeſty's pardon! Would you believe it? A third time the ſame man was guilty of the very ſame offence; a third time therefore the laws of his country found him guilty—I wiſh for the honour of humanity I could ſuppreſs the reſt!

reſt!——A third time he was pardoned! Will you not think ſuch a ſtory too extraordinary for belief? will you not think me deſcribing the ſavage inhabitants of Congo? alas, the ſtory is but too true, and the country where it was tranſacted regards itſelf as the politeſt in Europe! Adieu.

LETTER XXXIX.

From LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *to* ***, *Merchant in Amſterdam.*

CEREMONIES are different in every country, but true politeneſs is every where the ſame. Ceremonies, which take up ſo much of our attention, are only artificial helps which ignorance aſſumes, in order to imitate politeneſs, which is the reſult of good ſenſe and good nature. A perſon poſſeſſed of thoſe qualities, though he had never ſeen a court, is truely agreeable; and if without them, would continue a clown, though he had been all his life a gentleman uſher.

How would a Chineſe, bred up in the formalities of an eaſtern court, be regarded, ſhould he carry

carry all his good manners beyond the great wall? How would an Engliſhman, ſkilled in all the decorums of weſtern good breeding, appear at an eaſtern entertainment? would he not be reckoned more fantaſtically ſavage than even the unbred footman!

Ceremony reſembles that baſe coin which circulates through a country by the royal mandate; it ſerves every purpoſe of real money at home but is entirely uſeleſs if carried abroad: a perſon who ſhould attempt to circulate his native traſh in another country, would be thought ridiculous or culpable. He is truly well bred who knows when to value and when to deſpiſe thoſe national peculiarities which are regarded by ſome with ſo much obſervance: a traveller of taſte at once perceives that the wiſe are polite all the world over; but that fools are only polite at home.

I have now before me two very faſhionable letters upon the ſame ſubject, both written by ladies of diſtinction; one of whom leads the faſhion in England, and the other ſets the ceremonies of China. They are both regarded in their reſpective countries by all the beau-monde as ſtandards of taſte, and models of true politeneſs, and both give us a true

true idea of what they imagine elegant in their admirers; which of them underſtands true politeneſs, or whether either, you ſhall be at liberty to determine. The Engliſh lady writes thus to her female confidant.

" As I live, my dear Charlotte, I believe the colonel will carry it at laſt; he is a moſt irreſiſtible fellow, that's flat. So well dreſſed, ſo neat, ſo ſprightly, and plays about one ſo agreeably, that, I vow, he has as much ſpirits as the Marquis of Monkeyman's Italian greyhound. I firſt ſaw him at Ranelagh; he ſhines there; he is nothing without Ranelagh, and Ranelagh nothing without him. The next day he ſent a card, and compliments, deſiring to wait on mamma and me to the muſic ſubſcription. He looked all the time with ſuch irreſiſtible impudence, that poſitively he had ſomething in his face gave me as much pleaſure as a pair-royal of naturals in my own hand. He waited on mamma and me next morning to know how we got home: You muſt know the inſidious devil makes love to us both. Rap went the footman at the door; bounce went my heart; I thought he would have rattled the houſe down. Chariot drove up to the window, with his footman in the prettieſt liveries: he has infinite taſte, that's flat. Mamma had ſpent all the

the morning at her head; but, for my part, I was in an undreſs to receive him; quite eaſy, mind that; no way diſturbed at his approach: mamma pretended to be as degagee as I, and yet I ſaw her bluſh in ſpite of her. Poſitively he is a moſt killing devil! We did nothing but laugh all the time he ſtaid with us; I never heard ſo many very good things before. At firſt he miſtook mamma for my ſiſter; at which ſhe laughed: then he miſtook my natural complexion for paint; at which I laughed: and then he ſhewed us a picture in the lid of his ſnuff box, at which we all laughed. He plays picquet ſo very ill, and is ſo very fond of cards, and loſes with ſuch a grace, that poſitively he has won me; I have got a cool hundred, but have loſt my heart. I need not tell you that he is only a colonel of the train-bands. I am, dear Charlotte, your's for ever. BELINDA.

The Chineſe lady addreſſes her confidant, a poor relation of the family, upon the ſame occaſion; in which ſhe ſeems to underſtand decorums even better than the weſtern beauty. You who have reſided ſo long in China will readily acknowledge the picture to be taken from nature: and, by being acquainted with the Chineſe cuſtoms, will better apprehend the lady's meaning.

From YAOUA *to* YAYA.

Papa inſiſts upon one, two, three, four hundred taels from the colonel my lover, before he parts with a lock of my hair. Ho, how I wiſh the dear creature may be able to produce the money, and pay papa my fortune. The colonel is reckoned the politeſt man in all Shenſi. The firſt viſit he paid at our houſe; mercy, what ſtooping, and cringing, and ſtopping, and fidgetting, and going back, and creeping forward, there was between him and papa, one would have thought he had got the ſeventeen books of ceremonies all by heart. When he was come into the hall he flouriſhed his hands three times in a very graceful manner. Papa, who would not be undone, flouriſhed his four times; upon this the colonel began again, and both thus continued flouriſhing for ſome minutes in the politeſt manner imaginable. I was poſted in the uſual place behind the ſcreen, where I ſaw the whole ceremony through a ſlit. Of this the colonel was ſenſible, for papa informed him. I would have given the world to have ſhewn him my little ſhoes, but had no opportunity. It was the firſt time I had ever the happineſs of ſeeing any man but papa; and I vow, my dear Yaya, I thought my three ſouls would actually have fled from my lips. Ho, but he looked moſt charmingly; he is reckoned the beſt ſhaped man in the

whole

whole province, for he is very fat, and very ſhort: but even thoſe natural advantages are improved by his dreſs, which is faſhionable paſt deſcription. His head was cloſe ſhaven, all but the crown, and the hair of that was braided into a moſt beautiful tail, that reaching down to his heels, was terminated by a bunch of yellow roſes. Upon his firſt entering the room, I could eaſily perceive he had been highly perfumed with aſſafœtida. But then his looks, his looks, my dear Yaya, were irreſiſtible! He kept his eyes ſtedfaſtly fixed on the wall during the whole ceremony, and I ſincerely believe no accident could have diſcompoſed his gravity, or drawn his eyes away. After a polite ſilence of two hours, he gallantly begged to have the ſinging women introduced, purely for my amuſement. After one of them had for ſome time entertained us with her voice, the colonel and ſhe retired for ſome minutes together. I thought they would never have come back; I muſt own he is the moſt agreeable creature. Upon his return they again renew the concert, and he continued to gaze upon the wall as uſual; when, in leſs than half an hour more, ho! but he retired out of the room with another. He is indeed a moſt agreeable creature.

When he came to take his leave, the whole ceremony began afreſh; papa would ſee him to the door, but the colonel ſwore he would rather ſee the earth turned upſide down than permit him to ſtir a ſingle ſtep, and papa was at laſt obliged to comply. As ſoon as he was got to the door, papa went out to ſee him on horſeback: here they continued half an hour bowing and cringing, before one would mount, or the other go in; but the colonel was at laſt victorious. He had ſcarce gone an hundred paces from the houſe, when papa running out, halloo'd after him—"A good journey." Upon which the colonel returned, and would ſee papa into his houſe before ever he would depart. He was no ſooner got home than he ſent me a very fine preſent of duck-eggs painted of twenty different colours. His generoſity I own has won me. I have ever ſince been trying over the eight letters of good fortune, and have great hopes. All I have to apprehend is, that after he has married me, and that I am carried to his houſe cloſe ſhut up in my chair, when he comes to have the firſt ſight of my face, he may ſhut me up a ſecond time, and ſend me back to papa. However, I ſhall appear as fine as poſſible; Mamma and I have been to buy the cloaths for my wedding. I am to have a new *ſong whang* in my hair, the beak of which will reach down to

my

my noſe; the milliner from whom we bought that and our ribbons cheated us as if ſhe had no conſcience, and ſo to quiet mine I cheated her. All this is fair, you know. I remain, my dear Yaya,

Your ever faithful, YAOUA.

LETTER XL.

From the ſame.

YOU have always teſtified the higheſt eſteem for the Engliſh poets, and thought them not inferior to the Greeks, Romans, or even the Chineſe, in the art. But it is now thought, even by the Engliſh themſelves, that the race of their poets is extinct; every day produces ſome pathetic exclamation upon the decadence of taſte and genius. "Pegaſus," ſay they, "has ſlipped the bridal from his mouth, and our modern bards attempt to direct his flight, by catching him by the tail."

Yet, my friend, it is only among the ignorant that ſuch diſcourſes prevail; men of true diſcernment can ſee ſeveral poets ſtill among the Engliſh, ſome of whom equal, if not ſurpaſs, their predeceſ-

ſors.

ſors. The ignorant term that alone poetry which is couched in a certain number of ſyllables in every line, where a vipid thought is drawn out into a number of verſes of equal length, and perhaps pointed with rhymes at the end. But glowing ſentiment, ſtriking imagery, conciſe expreſſion, natural deſcription, and modulated periods, are full ſufficient entirely to fill up my idea of this art, and make way to every paſſion.

If my idea of poetry therefore be juſt, the Engliſh are not at preſent ſo deſtitute of poetical merit as they ſeem to imagine. I can ſee ſeveral poets in diſguiſe among them; men furniſhed with that ſtrength of ſoul, ſublimity of ſentiment, and grandeur of expreſſion, which conſtitutes the character. Many of the writers of their modern odes, ſonnets, tragedies or rebuſſes, it is true, deſerve not the name, though they have done nothing but clink rhymes and meaſure ſyllables for years together; their Johnſons and Smollets are truely poets; though for aught I know, they never made a ſingle verſe in their whole lives.

In every incipient language the poet and the proſe writer are very diſtinct in their qualifications, the poet ever proceeds firſt, treading unbeaten paths,

enriching

enriching his native funds, and employed in new adventures. The other follows with more cautious ſteps; and, though ſlow in his motions, treaſures up every uſeful or pleaſing diſcovery. But when once all the extent and the force of the language is known, the poet then ſeems to reſt from his labour, and is at length overtaken by his aſſiduous purſuer. Both characters are then blended into one; the hiſtorian and orator catch all the poet's fire, and leave him no real mark of diſtinction except the iteration of numbers regularly returning. Thus, in the decline of ancient European learning, Seneca, though he wrote in proſe, is as much a poet as Lucan; and Longinus, though but a critic more ſublime than Apollonius.

For this then it appears that poetry is not diſcontinued, but altered, among the Engliſh at preſent; the outward form ſeems different from what it was, but poetry ſtill continues internally the ſame; the only queſtion remains whether the metric feet uſed by the good writers of the laſt age, or the proſaic numbers employed by the good writers of this, be preferable. And here the practice of the laſt age appears to me ſuperior; they ſubmitted to the reſtraint of numbers and ſimilar ſounds; and this reſtraint, inſtead of diminiſhing, augmented the force

force of their ſentiment and ſtile. Fancy reſtrained may be compared to a fountain which plays higheſt by diminiſhing the aperture. Of the truth of this maxim, in every language, every fine writer is perfectly ſenſible from his own experience: and yet to explain the reaſon would be perhaps as difficult as to make a frigid genius profit by the diſcovery.

There is ſtill another reaſon in favour of the practice of the laſt age, to be drawn from the variety of modulation. The muſical period in proſe is confined to a very few changes; the numbers in verſe are capable of infinite variation. I ſpeak not now from the practice of modern verſe-writers, few of whom have any idea of muſical variety, but run on in the ſame monotonous flow through the whole poem; but rather from the example of their former poets, who were tolerable maſters of this variety, and alſo from a capacity in the language of ſtill admitting various unanticipated muſic.

Several rules have been drawn up for varying the poetic meaſure, and critics have elaborately talked of accents and ſyllables; but good ſenſe, and a fine ear, which rules can never teach, are what alone can in ſuch a caſe determine. The rapturous flowings of joy, or the interruptions of indignation, require

quire accents placed entirely different, and a ſtructure conſonant to the emotions they would expreſs. Changing paſſions, and numbers changing with thoſe paſſions, make the whole ſecret of weſtern as well as eaſtern poetry. In a word, the great faults of the modern profeſſed Engliſh poets are, that they ſeem to want numbers which ſhould vary with the paſſion, and are more employed in deſcribing to the imagination than ſtriking at the heart. Adieu.

LETTER XLI.

To the ſame.

SOME time ſince I ſent thee, Oh holy diſciple of Confucius, an account of the grand abbey or mauſoleum of the kings and heroes of this nation. I have ſince been introduced to a temple not ſo ancient, but far ſuperior in beauty and magnificence. In this, which is the moſt conſiderable of the empire, there are no pompous inſcriptions, no flattery paid the dead, but all is elegant and awfully ſimple. There are however a few rags hung around the walls, which have at a vaſt expence been taken from the enemy in the preſent war. The ſilk of which they are compoſed, when new, might be valued

at half a ſtring of copper money in China; yet this wiſe people fitted out a fleet and an army in order to ſeize them; though now grown old, and ſcarce capable of being patched up into a handkerchief. By this conqueſt the Engliſh are ſaid to have gained, and the French to have loſt, much honour. Is the honour of European nations placed only in tattered ſilk?

In this temple I was permitted to remain during the whole ſervice; and were you not already acquainted with the religion of the Engliſh, you might, from my deſcription, be inclined to believe them as groſsly idolatrous as the diſciples of Lao. The idol which they ſeem to addreſs, ſtrikes like a Coloſſus over the door of the inner temple, which here, as with the Jews, is eſteemed the moſt ſacred part of the building. Its oracles are delivered in an hundred various tones, which ſeem to inſpire the worſhippers with enthuſiaſm and awe: an old woman who appeared to be the prieſteſs, was employed in various attitudes, as ſhe felt the inſpiration. When it began to ſpeak, all the people remained fixed in ſilent attention, nodding aſſent, looking approbation, appearing highly edified by thoſe ſonnds which to a ſtranger might ſeem inarticulate and unmeaning.

When the idol had done ſpeaking, and the prieſteſs had locked up his lungs with a key, obſerving almoſt all the company leaving the temple, I concluded the ſervice was over, and taking my hat, was going to walk away with the crowd, when I was ſtopped by the man in black, who aſſured me that the ceremony had ſcarcely yet begun. "What!" cried I, "do I not ſee almoſt the whole body of the worſhippers leaving the church? Would you perſuade me that ſuch numbers who profeſs religion and morality would in this ſhameleſs manner quit the temple before the ſervice was concluded? you ſurely miſtake; not even the Kalmouks would be guilty of ſuch an indecency, though all the object of their worſhip was but a joint-ſtool." My friend ſeemed to bluſh for his countrymen, aſſuring me that thoſe whom I ſaw running away were only a parcel of muſical blockheads, whoſe paſſion was merely for ſounds, and whoſe heads were as empty as a fiddle-caſe. "Thoſe who remain behind," ſays he, "are the true religious; they make uſe of muſic to warm their hearts, and to lift them to a proper pitch of rapture: examine their behaviour, and you will confeſs there are ſome among us who practice true devotion.

I now looked round me as he directed, but ſaw nothing of that fervent devotion which he had promiſed: one of the worſhippers appeared to be ogling the company through a glaſs; another was fervent, not in addreſſes to heaven, but to his miſtreſs; a third whiſpered, a fourth took ſnuff, and the prieſt himſelf, in a drowſy tone, read over the duties of the day.

"Bleſs my eyes!" cried I, as I happened to look towards the door, "what do I ſee! one of the worſhippers fallen faſt aſleep, and actually ſunk down to his cuſhion! is he now enjoying the benefit of a trance, or does he receive the influence of ſome myſterious viſion?"—"Alas! alas!" replied my companion, "no ſuch thing; he has only had the misfortune of eating too hearty a dinner, and finds it impoſſible to keep his eyes open." Turning to another part of the temple, I perceived a young lady juſt in the ſame circumſtances and attitude. "Strange!" cried I, "can ſhe too have over-eaten herſelf?"—

"O, fie!" replied my friend, "you now grow cenſorious. She grow drowſy from eating too much! that would be profanation. She only ſleeps now from having ſat up all night at a brag party."

—"Turn

—"Turn me where I will, then," ſays I, "I can perceive no ſingle ſymptom of devotion among the worſhippers, except from that old woman in the corner, who ſits groaning behind the long ſticks of a mourning fan; ſhe indeed ſeems greatly edified with what ſhe hears."—"Aye," replied my friend, "I know we ſhould find ſome to catch you; I know her; that is the deaf lady who lives in the cloyſters."

In ſhort, the remiſſneſs of behaviour in almoſt all the worſhippers, and ſome even of the guardians, ſtruck me with ſurpriſe. I had been taught to believe that none were ever promoted to offices in the temple, but men remarkable for their ſuperior ſanctity, learning, and rectitude; and there was no ſuch thing heard of as perſons being introduced into the church merely to oblige a ſenator, or provide for the younger branch of a noble family: I expected, as their minds were continually ſet upon heavenly things, to ſee their eyes directed there alſo, and hoped from their behaviour to perceive their inclinations correſpond with their duty. But I am ſince informed, that ſome are appointed to preſide over temples they never viſit; and, while they receive all the money, are contented with letting others do all the good. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER XLII.

From FUM HOAM, *to* LEIN CHI ALTANGI, *the diſcontented wanderer, by the way of Moſcow.*

MUST I ever continue to condemn thy perſeverance, and blame that curioſity, which deſtroys thy happineſs! What yet untaſted banquet, what luxury yet unknown, has rewarded thy painful adventures! Name a pleaſure which thy native country could not amply procure; frame a wiſh that might not have been ſatisfied in China! Why then ſuch toil, and ſuch danger, in purſuit of raptures within your reach at home?

The Europeans, you will ſay, excel us in ſciences and in arts; thoſe ſciences which bound the aſpiring wiſh, and thoſe arts which tend to gratify even unreſtrained deſire. They may perhaps outdo us in the arts of building ſhips, caſting cannons, or meaſuring mountains; but are they ſuperior in the greateſt of all arts, the art of governing kingdoms and ourſelves?

When

When I compare the hiſtory of China with that of Europe, how do I exult in being a native of that kingdom which derives its original from the ſun! Upon opening the Chineſe hiſtory, I there behold an ancient extended empire, eſtabliſhed by laws which nature and reaſon ſeem to have dictated. The duty of children to their parents, a duty which nature implants in every breaſt, forms the ſtrength of that government which has ſubſiſted from time immemorial. Filial obedience is the firſt and greateſt requiſite of a ſtate; by this we become good ſubjects to our emperors, capable of behaving with juſt ſubordination to our ſuperiors, and grateful dependants on heaven; by this we become fonder of marriage, in order to be capable of exacting obedience from others in our turn; by this become good magiſtrates, for early ſubmiſſion is the trueſt leſſon to thoſe who would learn to rule. By this the whole ſtate may be ſaid to reſemble one family, of which the Emperor is the protector, father, and friend.

In this happy region, ſequeſtered from the reſt of mankind, I ſee a ſucceſſion of princes, who in general conſidered themſelves as the fathers of their people; a race of philoſophers, who bravely combated idolatry, prejudice, and tyranny, at the expence

pence of their private happineſs and immediate reputation. Whenever an uſurper or a tyrant intruded into the adminiſtration, how have all the good and great been united againſt him? Can European hiſtory produce an inſtance like that of the twelve mandarines, who all reſolved to appriſe the vicious Emperor Tiſiang of the irregularity of his conduct? He who firſt undertook the dangerous taſk, was cut in two by the emperor's order; the ſecond was ordered to be tormented, and then put to a cruel death; the third undertook the taſk with intrepidity, and was inſtantly ſtabbed by the tyrant's hand: in this manner they all ſuffered, except one. But not to be turned from his purpoſe, the brave ſurvivor entering the palace with the inſtruments of torture in his hand—"Here," cried he, addreſſing himſelf to the throne, "here O Tiſiang, are the marks your faithful ſubjects receive for their loyalty; I am wearied with ſerving a tyrant, and now come for my reward." The emperor, ſtruck with his intrepidity, inſtantly forgave the boldneſs of his conduct, and reformed his own. What European annals can boaſt of a tyrant thus reclaimed to lenity!

When five brethren had ſet upon the great Emperor Ginſon along, with his ſabre he ſlew four of them;

them; he was ſtruggling with the fifth, when his guards coming up, were going to cut the conſpirator into a thouſand pieces. "No, no," cried the emperor, with a calm and placid countenance, "of all his brothers he is the only one remaining; at leaſt let one of the family be ſuffered to live, that his aged parents may have ſomebody left to feed and comfort them."

When Haitong, the laſt emperor of the houſe of Ming, ſaw himſelf beſieged in his own city by the uſurper, he was reſolved to iſſue from his palace with ſix hundred of his guards, and give the enemy battle; but they forſook him. Being thus without hopes, and chuſing death, rather than to fall alive into the hands of a rebel, he retired to his garden, conducting his little daughter, an only child, in his hand; there, in a private arbour, unſheathing his ſword, he ſtabbed the young innocent to the heart, and then diſpatching himſelf, left the following words written with his blood on the border of his veſt—"Forſaken by my ſubjects, abandoned by my friends, uſe my body as you will, but ſpare, O ſpare, my people!"

An empire which has thus continued invariably the ſame for ſuch a long ſucceſſion of ages, which,

though at laſt conquered by the Tartars, ſtill preſerves its ancient laws and learning, and may more properly be ſaid to annex the dominions of Tartary to its empire, than to admit a foreign conqueror; an empire as large as Europe, governed by one law, acknowledging ſubjection to one prince, and experiencing but one revolution of any continuance in the ſpace of four thouſand years: this is ſomething ſo peculiarly great, that I am naturally led to deſpiſe all other nations on the compariſon. Here we ſee no religious perſecutions, no enmity between mankind, for difference in opinion. The diſciples of Lao Kium, the idolatrous ſectaries of Fohi, and the philoſophical children of Confucius, only ſtrive to ſhew by their actions the truth of their doctrines.

Now turn from this happy peaceful ſcene to Europe, the theatre of intrigue, avarice, and ambition. How many revolutions does it not experience in the compaſs even of one age? and to what do theſe revolutions tend but the deſtruction of thouſands? Every great event is replete with ſome new calamity. The ſeaſons of ſerenity are paſſed over in ſilence, their hiſtories ſeem to ſpeak only of the ſtorm.

There

There we ſee the Romans extending their power over barbarous nations, and in turn becoming a prey to thoſe whom they had conquered. We ſee thoſe barbarians, when become Chriſtians, engaged in continual wars with the followers of Mahomet; or, more dreadful ſtill, deſtroying each other. We ſee councils in the earlier ages authorizing every iniquity; cruſades ſpreading deſolation in the country left, as well as that to be conquered; excommunications fretting ſubjects from natural allegiance, and perſuading to ſedition; blood flowing in the fields and on ſcaffolds; tortures uſed as arguments to convince the recuſant: to heighten the horror of the piece, behold it ſhaded with wars, rebellions, treaſons, plots, politics and poiſon.

And what advantage has any country of Europe obtained from ſuch calamities? Scarce any. Their diſſentions for more than a thouſand years have ſerved to make each other unhappy, but have enriched none. All the great nations ſtill nearly preſerve their ancient limits; none have been able to ſubdue the other, and ſo terminate the diſpute. France, in ſpite of the conqueſts of Edward the third, and Henry the fifth, notwithſtanding the efforts of Charles the fifth, and Philip the ſecond, ſtill remains within its ancient limits. Spain, Germany,

Great Britain, Poland, the ſtates of the north, are nearly ſtill the ſame. What effect then has the blood of ſo many thouſands, the deſtruction of ſo many cities, produced? Nothing great or conſiderable. The Chriſtian princes have loſt indeed much from the enemies of Chriſtendom, but they have gained nothing from each other. Their princes, becauſe they preferred ambition to juſtice, deſerve the character of enemies to mankind; and their prieſts, by neglecting morality for opinion, have miſtaken the intereſts of ſociety.

On whatever ſide we regard the hiſtory of Europe, we ſhall perceive it to be a tiſſue of crimes, follies, and misfortunes, of politics without deſign, and wars without conſequence; in this long liſt, of human infirmity, a great character, or a ſhining virtue, may ſometimes happen to ariſe, as we often meet a cottage or a cultivated ſpot in the moſt hideous wilderneſs. But for an Alfred, an Alphonſo, a Frederic, or one Alexander III. we meet a thouſand princes who have diſgraced humanity.

LETTER

LETTER XLIII.

From LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *to* FUM HOAM, *firſt Preſident of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

WE have juſt received accounts here, that Voltaire the poet and philoſopher of Europe, is dead! He is now beyond the reach of the thouſand enemies who, while living, degraded his writings, and branded his character. Scarce a page of his latter productions that does not betray the agonies of an heart bleeding under the ſcourge of unmerited reproach. Happy therefore at laſt in eſcaping from calumny, happy in leaving a world that was unworthy of him and his writings.

Let others, my friend, beſtrew the hearſes of the great with panegyric; but ſuch a loſs as the world has now ſuffered affects me with ſtronger emotions. When a philoſopher dies, I conſider myſelf as loſing a patron, an inſtructor, and a friend. I conſider the world as loſing one who might ſerve to conſole her amidſt the deſolations of war and ambition. Nature every day produces in abundance men capable of filling all the requiſite duties of authority; but ſhe is niggard in the birth of an exalted

alted mind, ſcarcely producing in a century a ſingle genius to bleſs and enlighten a degenerate age. Prodigal in the production of kings, governors, mandarines, chams, and courtiers, ſhe ſeems to have forgotten, for more than three thouſand years, the manner in which ſhe once formed the brain of a Confucius; and well it is ſhe has forgotten, when a bad world gave him ſo very bad a reception.

Whence, my friend, this malevolence which has ever purſued the great even to the tomb? whence this more than fiend-like diſpoſition of embittering the lives of thoſe who would make us more wiſe and more happy?

When I caſt my eye over the fates of ſeveral philoſophers, who have at different periods enlightened mankind, I muſt confeſs it inſpires me with the moſt degrading reflections on humanity. When I read of the ſtripes of Mentius, the tortures of Tchin, the bowl of Socrates, and the bath of Seneca; when I hear of the perſecutions of Dante, the impriſonment of Galileo, the indignities ſuffered by Montange, the baniſhment of Carteſius, the infamy of Bacon; and that even Locke himſelf eſcaped not without reproach; when I think on ſuch

ſuch ſubjects, I heſitate whether moſt to blame, the ignorance or the villainy of my fellow creatures.

Should you look for the character of Voltaire among the journaliſts and illiterate writers of the age, you will there find him characteriſed as a monſter, with a head turned to wiſdom, and an heart inclining to vice; the powers of his mind and the baſeneſs of his principles forming a deteſtable contraſt. But ſeek for his character among writers like himſelf, and you find him very differently deſcribed. You perceive him in their accounts poſſeſſed of good nature, humanity, greatneſs of ſoul, fortitude, and almoſt every virtue: in this deſcription thoſe who might be ſuppoſed beſt acquainted with his character, are unanimous. The royal Pruſſian *, D'Argens †, Diderot ‡, D'Alambert, and Fontenelle, conſpire in drawing the picture, in deſcribing the friend of man and the patron of every riſing genius.

An inflexible perſeverance in what he thought was right, and a generous deteſtation of flattery, formed the ground-work of this great man's character. From theſe principles many ſtrong virtues and few faults aroſe; as he was warm in his friendſhip,

* Philoſophe ſans ſouci. † Let. Chin. ‡ Encycloped.

ſhip, and ſevere in reſentment, all that mention him ſeem poſſeſſed of the ſame qualities, and ſpeak of him with rapture or deteſtation. A perſon of his eminence, can have few indifferent as to his character; every reader muſt be an enemy or an admirer.

This poet began the courſe of glory ſo early as the age of eighteen, and even then was author of a tragedy which deſerves applauſe. Poſſeſſed of a ſmall patrimony, he preſerved his independence in an age of venality, and ſupported the dignity of learning, by teaching his cotemporary writers to live, like him, above all the favours of the great. He was baniſhed his native country for a ſatire upon the royal concubine. He had accepted the place of hiſtorian to the French king, but refuſed to keep it, when he found it was preſented only in order that he ſhould be the firſt flatterer of the ſtate.

The great Pruſſian received him as an ornament to his kingdom, and had ſenſe enough to value his friendſhip, and profit by his inſtructions. In this court he continued, till an intrigue with which the world ſeems hitherto unacquainted, obliged him to quit that country. His own happineſs, the happineſs of the monarch, *of his ſiſter*, of a part of the court, rendered his departure neceſſary.

Tired

Tired at length of courts, and all the follies of the great, he retired to Switzerland, a country of liberty, where he enjoyed tranquillity and the muſe. Here, though without any taſte for magnificence himſelf, he uſually entertained at his table the learned and polite of Europe, who were attracted by a deſire of ſeeing a perſon from whom they had received ſo much ſatisfaction. The entertainment was conducted with the utmoſt elegance, and the converſation was that of philoſophers. Every country that at once united liberty and ſcience, were his peculiar favourites. The being an Engliſhman was to him a character that claimed admiration and reſpect.

Between Voltaire and the diſciples of Confucius, there are many differences; however, being of a different opinion does not in the leaſt diminiſh my eſteem; I am not diſpleaſed with my brother, becauſe he happens to aſk our father for favours in a different manner from me. Let his errors reſt in peace, his excellencies deſerve admiration; let me with the wiſe admire his wiſdom; let the envious and the ignorant ridicule his foibles; the folly of others is ever moſt ridiculous to thoſe who are themſelves moſt fooliſh. Adieu.

LETTER XLIV.

From LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *to* HINGPO, *a ſlave in Perſia.*

IT is impoſſible to form a philoſophic ſyſtem of happineſs which is adapted to every condition in life, ſince every perſon who travels in this great purſuit takes a ſeparate road. The differing colours which ſuit different complexions, are not more various than the different pleaſures appropriated to different minds. The various ſects who have pretended to give leſſons to inſtruct men in happineſs, have deſcribed their own particular ſenſations without conſidering ours; have only loaded their diſciples with conſtraint, without adding to their real felicity.

If I find pleaſure in dancing, how ridiculous would it be in me to preſcribe ſuch an amuſement for the entertainment of a cripple! ſhould he, on the other hand, place his chief delight in painting, yet would not he be abſurd in recommending the ſame reliſh to one who had loſt the power of diſtinguiſhing colours. General directions are therefore commonly uſeleſs; and to be particular would exhauſt volumes,

volumes, ſince each individual may require a particular ſyſtem of precepts to direct his choice.

Every mind ſeems capable of entertaining a certain quantity of happineſs, which no inſtitutions can increaſe, no circumſtances alter, and entirely independent on fortune. Let any man compare his preſent fortune with the paſt, and he will probably find himſelf, upon the whole, neither better nor worſe than formerly.

Gratified ambition, or irreparable calamity, may produce tranſient ſenſations of pleaſure or diſtreſs. Thoſe ſtorms may diſcompoſe in proportion as they are ſtrong, or the mind is pliant to their impreſſion. But the ſoul, though at firſt lifted up by the event, is every day operated upon with diminiſhed influence, and at length ſubſides into the level of its uſual tranquillity. Should ſome unexpected turn of fortune take thee from fetters, and place thee on a throne, exultation would be natural upon the change; but the temper, like the face, would ſoon reſume its native ſerenity.

Every wiſh, therefore, which leads us to expect happineſs ſomewhere elſe but where we are, every inſtitution which teaches us that we ſhould be bet-

ter, by being poſſeſſed of ſomething new, which promiſes to lift us a ſtep higher than we are, only lays a foundation for uneaſineſs, becauſe it contracts debts which we cannot repay; it calls that a good, which when we have found it, will in fact add nothing to our happineſs.

To enjoy the preſent, without regret for the paſt, or ſolicitude for the future, has been the advice rather of poets than philoſophers. And yet the precept ſeems more rational than is generally imagined. It is the only general precept reſpecting the purſuit of happineſs, that can be applied with propriety to every condition of life. The man of pleaſure, the man of buſineſs, and the philoſopher, are equally intereſted in its diſquiſition. If we do not find happineſs in the preſent moment, in what ſhall we find it? Either in reflecting on the paſt, or prognoſticating the future. But let us ſee how theſe are capable of producing ſatisfaction.

A remembrance of what is paſt, and an anticipation of what is to come, ſeem to be the two faculties by which man differs moſt from other animals. Though brutes enjoy them in a limited degree, yet their whole life ſeems taken up in the preſent, regardleſs of the paſt and the future. Man, on the contrary,

contrary, endeavours to derive his happineſs, and experiences moſt of his miſeries, from theſe two ſources.

Is this ſuperiority of reflection a prerogative of which we ſhould boaſt, and for which we ſhall thank nature; or is it a misfortune of which we ſhould complain and be humble? Either from the abuſe or from the nature of things, it certainly makes our condition more miſerable.

Had we a privilege of calling up, by the power of memory, only ſuch paſſages as were pleaſing, unmixed with ſuch as were diſagreeable, we might then excite at pleaſure an ideal happineſs, perhaps more poignant than actual ſenſation. But this is not the caſe; the paſt is never repreſented without ſome diſagreeable circumſtance, which tarniſhes all its beauty; the remembrance of an evil carries in it nothing agreeable, and to remember a good, is always accompanied with regret. Thus we loſe more than we gain by remembrance.

And we ſhall find our expectation of the future to be a gift more diſtreſsful even than the former. To fear an approaching evil is certainly a moſt diſagreeable ſenſation; and in expecting an approaching

ing good, we experience the inquietude of wanting actual poſſeſſion.

Thus, which ever way we look, the proſpect is diſagreeable. Behind we have left pleaſures we ſhall never more enjoy, and therefore regret; and before, we ſee pleaſures which we languiſh to poſſeſs, and are conſequently uneaſy till we poſſeſs them. Was there any method of ſeizing the preſent, unembittered by ſuch reflections, then would our ſtate be tolerably eaſy.

This, indeed, is the endeavour of all mankind, who, untutored by philoſophy, purſue as much as they can a life of amuſement and diſſipation. Every rank in life, and every ſize of underſtanding, ſeems to follow this alone; or not purſuing it, deviates from happineſs. The man of pleaſure purſues diſſipation by profeſſion; the man of buſineſs purſues it not leſs, as every voluntary labour he undergoes is only diſſipation in diſguiſe. The philoſopher himſelf, even while he reaſons upon the ſubject, does it unknowingly with a view of diſſipating the thoughts of what he was, or what he muſt be.

The

The ſubject, therefore comes to this. Which is the moſt perfect ſort of diſſipation: pleaſure, buſineſs, or philoſophy? which beſt ſerves to exclude thoſe uneaſy ſenſations, which *memory* or *anticipation* produce?

The enthuſiaſm of pleaſure charms only by intervals. The higheſt rapture laſts only for a moment; and all the ſenſes ſeem ſo combined, as to be ſoon tired into languor by the gratification of any one of them. It is only among the poets we hear of men changing to one delight, when ſatiated with another. In nature it is very different; the glutton, when ſated with the full meal, is unqualified to feel the real pleaſure of drinking; the drunkard, in turn, finds few of thoſe tranſports which lovers boaſt in enjoyment; and the lover, when cloyed, finds a diminution of every other appetite. Thus, after a full indulgence of any one ſenſe, the man of pleaſure finds a languor in all, is placed in a chaſm between paſt and expected enjoyment, perceives an interval which muſt be filled up. The preſent can give no ſatisfaction, becauſe he has already robbed it of every charm: a mind thus left without immediate employment, naturally recurs to the paſt or future: the reflector finds that he was happy, and knows that he

cannot

cannot be ſo now; he ſees that he may yet be happy, and wiſhes the hour was come; thus every period of his continuance is miſerable, except that very ſhort one of immediate gratification. Inſtead of a life of diſſipation, none has more frequent converſations with diſagreeable *ſelf* than he: his enthuſiaſms are but few and tranſient; his appetites, like angry creditors, continually making fruitleſs demands for what he is unable to pay; and the greater his former pleaſures, the more ſtrong his regret, the more impatient his expectations: A life of pleaſure is, therefore, the moſt unpleaſing life in the world.

Habit has rendered the man of buſineſs more cool in his deſires; he finds leſs regret for paſt pleaſures, and leſs ſolicitude for thoſe to come. The life he now leads, though tainted in ſome meaſure with hope, is yet not afflicted ſo ſtrongly with regret, and is leſs divided between ſhort lived rapture and laſting anguiſh. The pleaſures he has enjoyed are not ſo vivid, and thoſe he has to expect, cannot conſequently create ſo much anxiety.

The philoſopher, who extends his regard to all mankind, muſt ſtill have a ſmaller concern for what has already affected, or may hereafter affect himſelf;

ſelf; the concerns of others make his whole ſtudy, and that ſtudy is pleaſure; and this pleaſure is continuing in its nature, becauſe it can be changed at will, leaving but few of theſe anxious intervals which are employed in remembrance or anticipation. The philoſopher, by this means, leads a life of al-almoſt continued diſſipation; and reflection, which makes the uneaſineſs and miſery of others, ſerves as a companion and inſtructor to him.

In a word, poſitive happineſs is conſtitutional, and incapable of increaſe; miſery is artificial, and generally proceeds from our folly. Philoſophy can add to our happineſs in no other manner, but by diminiſhing our miſery: it ſhould not pretend to increaſe our preſent ſtock, but make us œconomiſts of what we are poſſeſſed of. The great ſource of calamity lies in regret or anticipation: he, therefore, is moſt wiſe, who thinks of the preſent alone, regardleſs of the paſt or the future. This is impoſſible to the man of pleaſure; it is difficult to the man of buſineſs; and is in ſome meaſure attainable by the philoſopher. Happy were we all born philoſophers; all born with a talent of thus diſſipating our own cares, by ſpreading them upon all mankind! Adieu.

LETTER XLV.

From LEIN CHI ALTANGI, *to* FUM HOAM, *firſt Preſident of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

THOUGH the frequent invitations I receive from men of diſtinction here might excite the vanity of ſome, I am quite mortified however when I conſider the motives that inſpire their civility. I am ſent for, not to be treated as a friend, but to ſatisfy curioſity; not to be entertained, ſo much as wondered at; the ſame earneſtneſs which excites them to ſee a Chineſe, would have made them equally proud of a viſit from the rhinoceros.

From the higheſt to the loweſt, this people ſeem fond of ſights and monſters. I am told of a perſon here who gets a very comfortable livelihood by making wonders, and then ſelling or ſhewing them to the people for money, no matter how inſignificant they were in the beginning; by locking them up cloſe, and ſhewing for money, they ſoon became prodigies! His firſt eſſay in this way was to exhibit himſelf as a wax work figure behind a glaſs door at a puppet ſhow. Thus keeping the ſpectators at a proper diſtance, and having his head adorned

dorned with a copper crown, he looked extremely *natural, and very like the life itſelf.* He continued this exhibition with ſucceſs, till an involuntary fit of ſneezing brought him to life before all the ſpectators, and conſequently rendered him for that time as entirely uſeleſs, as the peaceable inhabitant of a catacomb.

Determined to act the ſtatue no more, he next levied contributions under the figure of an Indian king; and by painting his face, and counterfeiting the ſavage howl, he frighted ſeveral ladies and children with amazing ſucceſs: In this manner, therefore, he might have lived very comfortably, had he not been arreſted for a debt that was contracted when he was the figure in wax work: Thus his face underwent an involuntary ablution, and he found himſelf reduced to his primitive complexion and indigence.

After ſome time, being freed from goal, he was now grown wiſer, and inſted of making himſelf a wonder, was reſolved only to make wonders. He learned the art of paſting up mummies; was never at a loſs for an artificial *luſus naturæ;* nay, it has been reported, that he has ſold ſeven petrified lobſters of his own manufacture to a noted collector of

rarities; but this the learned Cracovius Putridus has undertaken to refute in a very elaborate diſſertation.

His laſt wonder was nothing more than a halter, yet by this halter he gained more than by all his former exhibitions. The people, it ſeems, had got it in their heads, that a certain noble criminal was to be hanged with a ſilken rope. Now there was no thing they ſo much wiſhed to ſee as this very rope; and he was reſolved to gratify their curioſity: he therefore got one made, not only of ſilk, but to render it the more ſtriking, ſeveral threads of gold were intermixed. The people paid their money only to ſee ſilk, but were highly ſatisfied when they found it was mixed with gold into the bargain. It is ſcarce neceſſary to mention, that the projector ſold his ſilken rope for almoſt what it had coſt him, as ſoon as the criminal was known to be hanged in hempen materials.

By their fondneſs of ſights, one would be apt to imagine, that inſtead of deſiring to ſee things as they ſhould be, they are rather ſolicitous of ſeeing them as they ought not to be. A cat with four legs is diſregarded, though never ſo uſeful; but if it has but two, and is conſequently incapable of catching

catching mice, it is reckoned ineſtimable, and every man of taſte is ready to raiſe the auction. A man, though in his perſon faultleſs as an aerial genius, might ſtarve; but if ſtuck over with hideous warts like a porcupine, his fortune is made for ever, and he may propagate the breed with impunity and applauſe.

A good woman in my neighbourhood, who was bred an habit-maker, though ſhe handled her needle tolerably well, could ſcarcely get employment. But being obliged by an accident to have both her hands cut off from her elbows, what would in another country have been her ruin, made her fortune here; ſhe now was thought more fit for her trade than before; buſineſs flowed in apace, and all people paid for ſeeing the mantua-maker who wrought without hands.

A gentleman ſhewing me his collection of pictures, ſtopped at one with peculiar admiration: "There," cries he, "is an ineſtimable piece!" I gazed at the picture for ſome time, but could ſee none of thoſe graces with which he ſeemed enraptured; it appeared to me the moſt paltry piece of the whole collection: I therefore demanded where thoſe beauties lay, of which I was yet inſenſible.

"Sir,"

"Sir," cries he, "the merit does not conſiſt in the piece, but in the manner in which it was done. The painter drew the whole with his foot, and held the pencil between his toes: I bought it at a very great price; for peculiar merit ſhould ever be rewarded."

But theſe people are not more fond of wonders, than liberal in rewarding thoſe who ſhow them. From the wonderful dog of knowledge, at preſent under the patronage of the nobility, down to the man with the box, who profeſſes to ſhew *the moſt exact imitation of nature that was ever ſeen*, they all live in luxury. A ſinging woman ſhall collect ſubſcriptions in her own coach and ſix; a fellow ſhall make a fortune by toſſing a ſtraw from his toe to his noſe; one in particular has found that eating fire was the moſt ready way to live; and another, who gingles ſeveral bells fixed to his cap, is the only man that I know of who has received emolument from the labours of his head.

A young author, a man of good nature and learning, was complaining to me ſome nights ago of this miſplaced generoſity of the times. "Here," ſays he, "have I ſpent part of my youth in attempting to inſtruct and amuſe my fellow creatures, and

all

all my reward has been ſolitude, poverty, and reproach; while a fellow, poſſeſſed of even the ſmalleſt ſhare of fiddling merit, or who has perhaps learned to whiſtle double, is rewarded, applauded, and careſſed!"—"Pr'ythee, young man," ſays I to him, "are you ignorant, that in ſo large a city as this, it is better to be an amuſing than an uſeful member of ſociety? Can you leap up, and touch your feet four times before you come to the ground?"—"No, Sir."—"Can you pimp for a man of quality?"—"No, Sir."—"Can you ſtand upon two horſes at full ſpeed?"—"No, Sir."—"Can you ſwallow a penknife?"—"*I can do none of theſe tricks.*"—"Why, then," cried I, "there is no other prudent means of ſubſiſtence left but to appriſe the town, that you ſpeedily intend to eat up your own noſe, by ſubſcription."

I have frequently regretted, that none of our eaſtern poſture-makers or ſhow-men have ever ventured to England. I ſhould be pleaſed to ſee that money circulate in Aſia, which is now ſent to Italy and France, in order to bring their vagabonds hither. Several of our tricks would undoubtedly give the Engliſh high ſatisfaction. Men of faſhion would be greatly pleaſed with the poſtures, as well as the condeſcenſion, of our dancing girls; and ladies

dies would equally admire the conductors of our fire-works. What an agreeable ſurpriſe would it be, to ſee a huge fellow with whiſkers flaſh a charged blunderbuſs full in a lady's face, without ſinging her hair, or melting her pomatum! Perhaps when the firſt ſurpriſe was over, ſhe might then grow familiar with danger; and the ladies might vie with each other in ſtanding fire with intrepidity.

But of all the wonders of the eaſt, the moſt uſeful, and I ſhould fancy, the moſt pleaſing, would be the looking-glaſs of Lao, which reflects the mind as well as the body. It is ſaid that the Emperor Chuſi uſed to make his concubines dreſs their heads and their hearts in one of theſe glaſſes every morning; while the lady was at her toilet, he would frequently look over her ſhoulder; and it is recorded, that among the three hundred which compoſed his ſeraglio, not one was found whoſe mind was not even more beautiful than her perſon.

I make no doubt but a glaſs in this country would have the very ſame effect. The Engliſh ladies, concubines and all, would undoubtedly cut very pretty figures in ſo faithful a monitor. There, ſhould we happen to peep over a lady's ſhoulder while dreſſing, we might be able to ſee neither gaming nor ill-nature;

ill-nature; neither pride, debauchery, nor a love of gadding. We ſhould find her, if any ſenſible defect appeared in the mind, more careful in rectifying it, than plaiſtering up the irreparable decays of the perſon; nay, I am even apt to fancy, that ladies would find more real pleaſure in this utenſil in private than in any other bauble imported from China, though never ſo expenſive or amuſing.

LETTER XLVI.

To the ſame.

UPON finiſhing my laſt letter I retired to reſt, reflecting upon the wonders of the glaſs of Lao, wiſhing to be poſſeſſed of one here, and reſolved in ſuch a caſe to oblige every lady with a ſight of it for nothing. What fortune denied me waking, fancy ſupplied in a dream: the glaſs, I know not how, was put into my poſſeſſion, and I could perceive ſeveral ladies approaching, ſome voluntarily, others driven forward againſt their inclination by a ſet of diſcontented genii, whom by intuition I knew were their huſbands.

The apartment in which I was to ſhow away was filled with ſeveral gaming tables, as if juſt forſaken; the candles were burnt to the ſocket, and the hour was five o'clock in the morning. Placed at one end of the room, which was of prodigious length, I could more eaſily diſtinguiſh every female figure as ſhe marched up from the door; but gueſs my ſurpriſe, when I could ſcarce perceive one blooming or agreeable face among the number. This, however, I attributed to the early hour, and kindly conſidered that the face of a lady juſt riſen from bed ought always to find a compaſſionate advocate.

The firſt perſon who came up in order to view her intellectual face, was a commoner's wife, who, as I afterwards found, being bred up during her virginity, in a pawn-broker's ſhop, now attempted to make up the defects of breeding and ſentiment, by the magnificence of her dreſs, and the expenſiveneſs of her amuſements. "Mr Showman," cried ſhe, approaching, "I am told you *has* ſomething to ſhew in *that there* ſort of majic-lanthorn, by which folks can ſee themſelves on the inſide; I proteſt, as my Lord Beetle ſays, I am ſure it will be vaſtly pretty, for I have never ſeen any thing like it before. But how; are we to ſtrip off our cloaths, and be turned inſide out; if ſo, as Lord Beetle

Beetle ſays, I abſolutely declare off; for I would not ſtrip for the world before a man's face, and ſo I *tells* his lordſhip almoſt every night of my life." I informed the lady that I would diſpenſe with the ceremony of ſtripping, and immediately preſented my glaſs to her view.

As when a firſt rate beauty, after having with difficulty eſcaped the ſmall-pox, reviſits her favourite mirror; that mirror which had repeated the flattery of every lover, and even added force to the compliment; expecting to ſee what had ſo often given her pleaſure, ſhe do longer beholds the cherried lip, the poliſhed forehead, and ſpeaking bluſh, but an hateful phiz, quilted into a thouſand ſeams by the hand of deformity; grief, reſentment, and rage, fill her boſom by turns; ſhe blames the fates and the ſtars, but moſt of all the unhappy glaſs feels her reſentment. So it was with the lady in queſtion; ſhe had never ſeen her own mind before, and was now ſhocked at its deformity. One ſingle look was ſufficient to ſatisfy her curioſity. I held up the glaſs to her face, and ſhe ſhut her eyes; no entreaties could prevail upon her to gaze once more! ſhe was even going to ſnatch it from my hands, and break it in a thouſand pieces. I found

it was time, therefore, to diſmiſs her as incorrigible, and ſhew away to the next that offered.

This was an unmarried lady, who continued in a ſtate of virginity till thirty-ſix, and then admitted a lover when ſhe deſpaired of an huſband. No woman was louder at a revel than ſhe, perfectly free hearted, and almoſt in every reſpect a man; ſhe underſtood ridicule to perfection, and was once known even to ſally out in order to beat the watch. "Here, you, my dear with the outlandiſh face," ſaid ſhe, addreſſing me, "let me take a ſingle peep. Not that I care three damns what figure I may cut in the glaſs of ſuch an old faſhioned creature; if I am allowed the beauties of the face by people of faſhion, I know the world will be complaiſant enough to toſs me the beauties of the mind into the bargain." I held my glaſs before her as ſhe deſired, and muſt confeſs, was ſhocked with the reflection. The lady, however, gazed for ſome time with the utmoſt complacency; and at laſt turning to me, with the moſt ſatisfied ſmile, ſaid, ſhe never could think ſhe had been half ſo handſome.

Upon her diſmiſſion, a lady of diſtinction was reluctantly hawled along to the glaſs by her huſband. In bringing her forward, as he came firſt

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to the glaſs himſelf, his mind appeared tinctured with immoderate jealouſy, and I was going to reproach him for uſing her with ſuch ſeverity; but when the lady came to preſent herſelf, I immediately retracted; for alas! it was ſeen that he had but too much reaſon for his ſuſpicions.

The next was a lady who uſually teized all her acquaintance in deſiring to be told of her faults, and then never mended any. Upon approaching the glaſs, I could readily perceive vanity, affectation, and ſome other ill-looking blots, on her mind; wherefore by my advice ſhe immediately ſet about mending. But I could eaſily find ſhe was not in earneſt in the work; for as ſhe repaired them on one ſide, they generally broke out on another. Thus, after three or four attempts, ſhe began to make the ordinary uſe of the glaſs in ſetting her hair.

The company now made room for a woman of learning, who approached with a ſlow pace, and a ſolemn countenance, which, for her own ſake, I could wiſh had been cleaner. "Sir," cried the lady, flouriſhing her hand, which held a pinch of ſnuff, "I ſhall be enraptured by having preſented to my view a mind with which I have ſo long ſtudied to be acquainted: but, in order to give the ſex

a proper example, I muſt inſiſt, that all the company may be permitted to look over my ſhoulder." I bowed aſſent, and preſenting the glaſs, ſhewed the lady a mind by no means ſo fair as ſhe had expected to ſee. Ill-nature, ill-placed pride, and ſpleen, were too legible to be miſtaken. Nothing could be more amuſing than the mirth of her female companions who had looked over. They had hated her from the beginning, and now the apartment echoed with an univerſal laugh. Nothing but a fortitude like her's could have withſtood their raillery: ſhe ſtood it, however; and when the burſt was exhauſted, with great tranquillity ſhe aſſured the company, that the whole was a *deceptio viſus*; and that ſhe was too well acquainted with her own mind to believe any falſe repreſentations from another. Thus ſaying, ſhe retired with a ſullen ſatisfaction, reſolved not to mend her faults, but to write a criticiſm on the mental reflector.

I muſt own, by this time I began myſelf to ſuſpect the fidelity of my mirror; for as the ladies appeared at leaſt to have the merit of riſing early, ſince they were up at five, I was amazed to find nothing of this good quality pictured upon their minds in the reflection; I was reſolved, therefore, to communicate my ſuſpicions to a lady, whoſe intellectual

tellectual countenance appeared more fair than any of the reſt, not having above ſeventy-nine ſpots in all, beſides ſlips and foibles. "I own, young woman," ſaid I, "that there are ſome virtues upon that mind of your's; but there is ſtill one which I do not ſee repreſented; I mean that of riſing betimes in the morning; I fancy the glaſs falſe in that particular." The young lady ſmiled at my ſimplicity; and, with a bluſh, confeſſed, that ſhe and the whole company had been up all night gaming.

By this time all the ladies, except one, had ſeen themſelves ſucceſſively, and diſliked the ſhow, or ſcolded the ſhow-man; I was reſolved, however, that ſhe who ſeemed to neglect herſelf, and was neglected by the reſt, ſhould take a view; and going up to a corner of the room, where ſhe ſtill continued ſitting, I preſented my glaſs full in her face. Here it was that I exulted in my ſucceſs; no blot, no ſtain, appeared on any part of the faithful mirror. As when the large, unwritten page preſents its ſnowy ſpotleſs boſom to the writer's hand, ſo appeared the glaſs to my view. "Here O ye daughters of Engliſh anceſtors," cried I, "turn hither, and behold an object worthy imitation: look upon the mirror now, and acknowledge its juſtice, and this woman's pre-eminence!" The ladies obeying

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the ſummons, came up in a groupe, and looking on, acknowledged there was ſome truth in the picture, as the perſon now repreſented had been deaf, dumb, and a fool from her craddle.

This much of my dream I diſtinctly remember; the reſt was filled with chimæras, enchanted caſtles, and flying dragons, as uſual. As you, my dear Fum Hoam, are particularly verſed in the interpretation of thoſe midnight warnings, what pleaſure ſhould I find in your explanation: but that our diſtance prevents; I make no doubt, however, but that from my deſcription you will very much venerate the good qualities of the Engliſh ladies in general, ſince dreams, you know, go always by contraries. Adieu.

LETTER XLVII.

From LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *to* HINGPO, *a ſlave in Perſia* *.

YOUR laſt letters betray a mind ſeemingly fond of wiſdom, yet tempeſted up by a thouſand various paſſions

* This letter appears to be little more than a rhapſody of ſentiments from Confucius. Vid. the Latin tranſlation.

paſſions. You would fondly perſuade me that my former leſſons ſtill influence your conduct, and yet your mind ſeems not leſs enſlaved than your body. Knowledge, wiſdom, erudition, arts, and elegance, what are they, but the mere trappings of the mind, if they do not ſerve to increaſe the happineſs of the poſſeſſor? A mind rightly inſtituted in the ſchool of philoſophy, acquires at once the ſtability of the oak, and the flexibility of the oſier. The trueſt manner of leſſening our agonies, is to ſhrink from their preſſure; is to confeſs that we feel them.

The fortitude of European ſages is but a dream; for where lies the merit in being inſenſible to the ſtrokes of fortune, or in diſſembling our ſenſibility? if we are inſenſible, that ariſes only from an happy conſtitution; that is a bleſſing previouſly granted by heaven, and which no art can procure, no inſtitutions improve.

If we diſſemble our feelings, we only artificially endeavour to perſuade others that we enjoy privileges which we actually do not poſſeſs. Thus while we endeavour to appear happy, we feel at once all the pangs of internal miſery, and all the ſelf-reproaching conſcioufneſs of endeavouring to deceive.

I know but of two ſects of philoſophers in the world that have endeavoured to inculcate that fortitude is but an imaginary virtue; I mean the followers of Confucius, and thoſe who profeſs the doctrines of Chriſt. All other ſects teach pride under misfortunes; they alone teach humility. "Night," ſays our Chineſe philoſopher, "not more ſurely follows day, than groans and tears grow out of pain." When misfortunes therefore oppreſs, when tyrants threaten, it is our intereſt, it is our duty, to fly even to diſſipation for ſupport, to ſeek redreſs from friendſhip, or ſeek redreſs from that beſt of friends who loved us into being.

Philoſophers, my ſon, have long declaimed againſt the paſſions, as being the ſource of all our miſeries; they are the ſource of all our misfortunes I own, but they are the ſouree of our pleaſures too: and every endeavour of our lives, and all the inſtitutions of philoſophy, ſhould tend to this, not to diſſemble an abſence of paſſion, but to repel thoſe which lead to vice, by thoſe which direct to virtue.

The ſoul may be compared to a field of battle, where two armies are ready every moment to encounter; not a ſingle vice but has a more powerful opponent; and not one virtue but may be overborne

borne by a combination of vices. Reaſon guides the bands of either hoſt, nor can it ſubdue one paſſion, but by the aſſiſtance of another. Thus, as a bark on every ſide beſet with ſtorms, enjoys a ſtate of reſt, ſo does the mind, when influenced by a juſt equipoiſe of the paſſions, enjoy tranquillity.

I have uſed ſuch means as my little fortune would admit to procure your freedom. I have lately written to the governor of Argun to pay your ranſom, though at the expence of all the wealth I brought with me from China. If we become poor, we ſhall at leaſt have the pleaſure of bearing poverty together; for what is fatigue or famine, when weighed againſt friendſhip and freedom? Adieu.

LETTER XLVIII.

From LIEN CHI ALTANGI *to****, *Merchant in Amſterdam.*

HAPPENING ſome days ago to call at a painter's to amuſe myſelf in examining ſome pictures, (I had no deſign to buy) it ſurpriſed me to ſee a young Prince in the working-room, dreſſed in a painter's

apron, and aſſiduouſly learning the trade. We inſtantly remembered to have ſeen each other; and, after the uſual compliments, I ſtood by while he continued to paint on. As every thing done by the rich is praiſed, as princes here, as well as in China, are never without followers, three or four perſons, who had the appearance of gentlemen, were placed behind to comfort and applaud him at every ſtroke.

Need I tell, that it ſtruck me with very diſagreeable ſenſations, "to ſee a youth, who by his ſtation in life had it in his power to be uſeful to thouſands, thus letting his mind run to waſte upon canvas, and at the ſame time fancying himſelf improving in taſte, and filling his rank with proper decorum."

As ſeeing an error, and attempting to redreſs it, are only one and the ſame with me, I took occaſion, upon his lordſhip's deſiring my opinion of a Chineſe ſcroll, intended for the frame of a picture; to aſſure him that a mandarine of China thought a minute acquaintance with ſuch mechanical trifles below his dignity.

This reply raiſed the indignation of ſome, and the contempt of others: I could here the names of Vandal, Goth, taſte, polite arts, delicacy, and fire, repeated

repeated in tones of ridicule or reſentment. But conſidering that it was in vain to argue againſt people who had ſo much to ſay, without contradicting them, I begged leave to repeat a fairy tale. This requeſt redoubled their laughter; but not eaſily abaſhed at the raillery of boys, I perſiſted, obſerving that it would ſet the abſurdity of placing our affections upon trifles in the ſtrongeſt point of view; and adding, that it was hoped the moral would compenſate for its ſtupidity. "For heaven's ſake," cried the great man, waſhing his bruſh in water, "let us have no morality at preſent; if we muſt have a ſtory, let it be without any moral." I pretended not to hear; and while he handled the bruſh, proceeded as follows:——

IN the kingdom of Bonbobbin, which, by the Chineſe annal, appears to have flouriſhed twenty thouſand years ago, there reigned a prince endowed with every accompliſhment which generally diſtinguiſhes the ſons of kings. His beauty was brighter than the ſun. The ſun, to which he was nearly related, would ſometimes ſtop his courſe in order to look down and admire him.

His mind was not leſs perfect than his body; he knew all things without having ever read; philoſophers

ſophers, poets, and hiſtorians, ſubmitted their works to his deciſion; and ſo penetrating was he, that he could tell the merit of a book by looking on the cover. He made epic poems, tragedies, and paſtorals, with ſurpriſing facility; ſong, epigram, or rebus, was all one to him; though it is obſerved he could never finiſh an acroſtic. In ſhort, the fairy, who preſided at his birth, had endowed him with almoſt every perfection; or what was juſt the ſame, his ſubjects were ready to acknowledge he poſſeſſed them all; and, for his own part, he knew nothing to the contrary. A prince ſo accompliſhed, received a name ſuitable to his merit; and he was called *Bonbenin bonbobbin bonbobbinet*, which ſignifies *Enlightner of the Sun.*

As he was very powerful, and yet unmarried, all the neighbouring kings earneſtly ſought his alliance. Each ſent his daughter, dreſſed out in the moſt magnificent manner, and with the moſt ſumptuous retinue imaginable, in order to allure the prince: ſo that at one time there were ſeen at his court not leſs than ſeven hundred foreign princeſſes, of exquiſite ſentiment and beauty, each alone ſufficient to make ſeven hundred ordinary men happy.

Diſtracted

Diſtracted in ſuch a variety, the generous Bonbenin, had he not been obliged by the laws of the empire to make choice of one, would very willingly have married them all, for noneunderſtood gallantry better. He ſpent numberleſs hours of ſolicitude, in endeavouring to determine whom he ſhould chuſe; one lady was poſſeſſed of every perfection, but he diſliked her eye-brows; another was brighter than the morning ſtar, but he diſapproved her fong whang; a third did not lay white enough on her cheek; and a fourth did not ſufficiently blacken her nails. At laſt, after numberleſs diſappointments on the one ſide and the other, he made choice of the incomparable Nanhoa, queen of the ſcarlet dragons.

The preparations for the royal nuptials, or the envy of the diſappointed ladies, need no deſcription; both the one and the other were as great as they could be; the beautiful princeſs was conducted, amidſt admiring multitudes to the royal couch, where, after being diveſted of every encumbering ornament, ſhe was placed, in expectance of the youthful bridegroom, who did not keep her long in expectation. He came more chearful than the morning, and printing on her lips a burning kiſs,

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the attendants took this as a proper ſignal to withdraw.

Perhaps I ought to have mentioned in the beginning, that among ſeveral other qualifications, the prince was fond of collecting and breeding mice, which being an harmleſs paſtime, none of his counſellors thought proper to diſſuade him from: he therefore kept a great variety of theſe pretty little animals in the moſt beautiful cages, enriched with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, pearls, and other precious ſtones: thus he *innocently* ſpent four hours each day, in contemplating their innocent little paſtimes.

But to proceed. The prince and princeſs were now in bed; one with all the love and expectation, the other with all the modeſty and fear, which is natural to ſuppoſe; both willing, yet afraid to begin; when the prince happening to look towards the outſide of the bed, perceived one of the moſt beautiful animals in the world, a white mouſe with green eyes, playing about the floor, and performing an hundred pretty tricks. He was already maſter of blue mice, red mice, and even white mice with yellow eyes; but a white mouſe with green eyes, was what he had long endeavoured to poſſeſs: wherefore leaping from bed with the utmoſt

impatience

impatience and agility, the youthful prince attempted to ſeize the little charmer, but it was fled in a moment; for, alas! the mouſe was ſent by a diſcontented princeſs, and was itſelf a fairy.

It is impoſſible to deſcribe the agony of the prince upon this occaſion; he ſought round and round every part of the room, even the bed where the princeſs lay was not exempt from the inquiry: he turned the princeſs on one ſide and t'other, ſtripped her quite naked, but no mouſe was to be found; the princeſs herſelf was kind enough to aſſiſt, but ſtill to no purpoſe.

"Alas," cried the young prince in an agony, "how unhappy am I to be thus diſappointed! never ſure was ſo beautiful an animal ſeen! I would give half my kingdom, and my princeſs, to him that would find it." The princeſs, though not much pleaſed with the latter part of his offer, endeavoured to comfort him as well as ſhe could; ſhe let him know that he had an hundred mice already, which ought to be at leaſt ſufficient to ſatisfy any philoſopher like him. Though none of them had green eyes, yet he ſhould learn to thank heaven that they had eyes. She told him, (for ſhe was a profound moraliſt) that incurable evils muſt be borne, that

uſeleſs lamentations were vain, and that man was born to misfortunes; ſhe even entreated him to return to bed, and ſhe would endeavour to lull him on her boſom to repoſe; but ſtill the prince continued inconſolable; and regarding her with a ſtern air, for which his family was remarkable, he vowed never to ſleep in the royal palace, or indulge himſelf in the innocent pleaſures of matrimony, till he had found the white mouſe with the green eyes.

"Pr'ythee, Col. Leech," cried his lordſhip, interrupting me, "how do you like that noſe? don't you think there is ſomething of the manner of Rembrandt in it? A prince in all this agony for a white mouſe! O ridiculous!——Don't you think, Major Vampyre, that eye-brow ſtippled very prettily? but pray what are the green eyes to the purpoſe, except to amuſe children? I would give a thouſand guineas to lay on the colouring of this cheek more ſmoothly. But I aſk pardon: pray, ſir, proceed.

LETTER XLIX.

From the ſame.

KINGS, (continued I,) at that time were different from what they are now; they then never engaged

gaged their word for any thing which they did not rigorouſly intend to perform. This was the caſe of Bonbenin, who continued all night to lament his misfortunes to the princeſs, who echoed groan for groan. When morning came, he publiſhed an edict, offering half his kingdom, and his princeſs, to the perſon who ſhould catch and bring him the white mouſe with green eyes.

The edict was ſcarce publiſhed, when all the traps in the kingdom were baited with cheeſe; numberleſs mice were taken and deſtroyed; but ſtill the much wiſhed-for mouſe was not among the number. The privy council were aſſembled more than once to give their advice; but all their deliberations came to nothing; even though there were two complete vermin-killers and three profeſſed rat-catchers of the number. Frequent addreſſes, as is uſual on extraordinary occaſions, were ſent from all parts of the empire; but though theſe promiſed well, though in vain he received an aſſurance, that his faithful ſubjects would aſſiſt in his ſearch with their lives and fortunes, yet, with all their loyalty, they failed when the time came that the mouſe was to be caught.

The Prince therefore was reſolved to go himſelf in ſearch, determined never to lie two nights in one place till he had found what he ſought for. Thus quitting his palace without attendants, he ſet out upon his journey, and travelled through many a deſart, and croſſed many a river, high over hills, and down along vales, ſtill reſtleſs, ſtill inquiring wherever he came; but no white mouſe was to be found.

As one day, fatigued with his journey, he was ſhading himſelf from the heat of the mid-day ſun, under the arching branches of a banana-tree, meditating on the object of his purſuit, he perceived an old woman, hideouſly deformed, approaching him; by her ſtoop, and the wrinkles of her viſage, ſhe ſeemed at leaſt five hundred years old; and the ſpotted toad was not more freckled than was her ſkin. "Ah! Prince Bonbenin bonbobbin bonbobbinet," cried the fairy, "what has led you ſo many thouſand miles from your own kingdom? what is it you look for; and what induces you to travel into the kingdom of Emmets?" The prince, who was exceſſively complaiſant, told her the whole ſtory three times over; for ſhe was hard of hearing. "Well," ſays the old fairy, for ſuch ſhe was, "I promiſe to put you in poſſeſſion of the white mouſe

mouſe with green eyes, and that immediately too, upon one condition."—"One condition!" cried the prince, in a rapture, "name a thouſand; I ſhall undergo them all with pleaſure."—"Nay," interrupted the old fairy, "I aſk but one, and that not very mortifying neither; it is only that you inſtantly conſent to marry me."

It is impoſſible to expreſs the prince's confuſion at this demand; he loved the mouſe, but he deteſted the bride; he heſitated; he deſired time to think upon the propoſal; he would have been glad to conſult his friends on ſuch an occaſion. "Nay, nay," cried the odious fairy, "if you demur, I retract my promiſe; I do not deſire to force my favours on any man.—Here, you my attendants," cried ſhe, ſtamping with her foot, "let my machine be driven up; Barbacela, Queen of Emmets, is not uſed to contemptuous treatment." She had no ſooner ſpoken, than her fiery chariot appeared in the air, drawn by two ſnails; and ſhe was juſt going to ſtep in, when the prince reflected, that now or never was the time to be poſſeſſed of the white mouſe; and quite forgetting his lawful princeſs Nanhoa, falling on his knees, he implored forgiveneſs for having raſhly rejected ſo much beauty. This well-timed compliment inſtantly appeaſed

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the angry fairy. She affected an hideous leer of approbation; and, taking the young prince by the hand, conducted him to a neighbouring church, where they were married together in a moment. As ſoon as the ceremony was performed, the prince, who was to the laſt degree deſirous of ſeeing his favourite mouſe, reminded the bride of her promiſe. "To confeſs a truth, my prince," cried ſhe, "I myſelf am that very white mouſe you ſaw on your wedding night in the royal apartment. I now therefore give you the choice, whether you would have me a mouſe by day and a woman by night, or a mouſe by night and a woman by day." Though the prince was an excellent caſuiſt, he was quite at a loſs how to determine, but at laſt thought it moſt prudent to have recourſe to a blue cat that had followed him from his own dominions, and frequently amuſed him with its converſation, and aſſiſted him with its advice; in fact his cat was no other than the faithful princeſs Nanhoa herſelf, who had ſhared with him all his hardſhips in this diſguiſe.

By her inſtructions, he was determined in his choice; and returning to the old fairy, prudently obſerved, thas as ſhe muſt have been ſenſible he had married her *only for the ſake of what ſhe had*, and not

not for her perſonal qualifications, he thought it would, for ſeveral reaſons, be moſt convenient, if ſhe continued a woman by day, and appeared a mouſe by night.

The old fairy was a good deal mortified at her huſband's want of gallantry, though ſhe was reluctantly obliged to comply; the day was therefore ſpent in the moſt polite amuſements; the gentlemen talked ſmut; and the ladies laughed, and were angry. At laſt the happy night drew near; the blue cat ſtill ſtuck by the ſide of its maſter, and even followed him to the bridal apartment. Barbacela entered the chamber, wearing a train of fifteen yards long, ſupported by porcupines, and all over beſet with jewels, which ſerved to render her more deteſtable. She was juſt ſtepping into bed to the prince, forgetting her promiſe, when he inſiſted upon ſeeing her in the ſhape of a mouſe. She had promiſed, and no fairy can break her word; wherefore aſſuming the figure of the moſt beautiful mouſe in the world, ſhe ſkipped and played about with an infinity of amuſement. The prince, in an agony of rapture, was deſirous of ſeeing his pretty playfellow move a ſlow dance about the floor to his own ſinging; he began to ſing, and the mouſe immediately to perform with the moſt perfect

perfect knowledge of time, and the fineſt grace and greateſt gravity imaginable: it only began, for Nanhoa, who had long waited for the opportunity in the ſhape of a cat, flew upon it inſtantly without remorſe, and eating it up in the hundredth part of a moment, broke the charm, and then reſumed her natural figure.

The prince now found that he had all along been under the power of enchantment; that his paſſion for the white mouſe was entirely fictitious, and not the genuine complexion of his ſoul; he now ſaw that his earneſtneſs after mice was an illiberal amuſement, and much more becoming a rat-catcher than a prince. All his meanneſſeſs now ſtared him in the face, he begged the diſcreet princeſs's pardon an hundred times. The princeſs very readily forgave him; and both returning to their palace in Bonbobbin, lived very happily together, and reigned many years with all that wiſdom, which, by the ſtory, they appear to have been poſſeſſed of; perfectly convinced, by their former adventures, that *they who place their affections on trifles at firſt for amuſement, will find thoſe trifles at laſt become their moſt ſerious concern.* Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER L.

From LEIN CHI ALTANGI, *to* FUM HOAM, *firſt Preſident of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

ASK an Engliſhman what nation in the world enjoys moſt freedom, and he immediately anſwers, his own. Aſk him, in what that freedom principally conſiſts, and he is inſtantly ſilent. This happy pre-eminence does not ariſe from the people's enjoying a larger ſhare in legiſlation than elſewhere; for in this particular, ſeveral ſtates in Europe excel them; nor does it ariſe from a greater exemption from taxes, for few countries pay more; it does not proceed from their being reſtrained by fewer laws, for no people are burdened with ſo many; nor does it particularly conſiſt in the ſecurity of their property, for property is pretty well ſecured in every polite ſtate of Europe.

How then are the Engliſh more free, (for more free they certainly are) than the people of any other country or under any other form of government whatever? Their freedom conſiſts in their enjoying all the advantages of democracy with this ſuperior prerogative borrowed from monarchy, that—" the

ſeverity of their laws may be relaxed, without endangering the conſtitution."

In a monarchial ſtate, in which the conſtitution is ſtrongeſt, the laws may be relaxed without danger; for though the people ſhould be unanimous in the breach of any one in particular, yet ſtill there is an *effective* power ſuperior to the people, capable of enforcing obedience, whenever it may be proper to inculcate the law either towards the ſupport or welfare of the community.

But all thoſe governments where laws derive their ſanction from the *people alone*, tranſgreſſions cannot be over looked without bringing the conſtitution into danger. They who tranſgreſs the law in ſuch a caſe, are thoſe who preſcribe it; by which means it loſes not only its influence, but its ſanction. In every republic the laws muſt be ſtrong, becauſe the conſtitution is feeble; they muſt reſemble an Aſiatic huſband, who is juſtly jealous, becauſe he knows himſelf impotent. Thus in Holland, Switzerland, and Genoa, new laws are not frequently enacted, but old ones are obſerved with unremitting ſeverity. In ſuch republics therefore the people are ſlaves to laws of their own making, little leſs than in unmixed monarchies, where they are

ſlaves

ſlaves to the will of one, ſubject to frailties like themſelves.

In England, from a variety of happy accidents, their conſtitution is juſt ſtrong enough, or, if you will, mechanical enough, to permit a relaxation of the ſeverity of laws, and yet thoſe laws ſtill to remain ſufficiently ſtrong to govern the people. This is the moſt perfect ſtate of civil liberty, of which we can form an idea; here we ſee a greater number of laws than in any other country, while the people at the ſame time obey only ſuch as are *immediately* conducive to the intereſts of ſociety; ſeveral are unnoticed, many unknown; ſome kept to be revived and enforced upon proper occaſions, others left to grow obſolete, even without the neceſſity of abrogation.

Scarce an Engliſhman who does not, almoſt every day of his life, offend with impunity againſt ſome expreſs law, and for which, in a certain conjuncture of circumſtances, he would not receive puniſhment. Gaming-houſes, preaching at prohibited places, aſſembled crowds, nocturnal amuſements, public ſhows, and an hundred other inſtances, are forbid, and frequented. Theſe prohibitions are uſeful; though it be prudent in their magiſtrates, and

and happy for their people, that they are not enforced, and none but the venal or mercenary attempt to enforce them.

The law in this caſe, like an indulgent parent, ſtill keeps the rod, though the child is ſeldom corrected. Were thoſe pardoned offences to riſe into enormity, were they likely to obſtruct the happineſs of ſociety, or endanger the ſtate, it is then that juſtice would reſume her terrors, and puniſh thoſe faults ſhe had ſo often overlooked with indulgence. It is to this ductility of the laws that an Engliſhman owes the freedom he enjoys ſuperior to others in a more popular government; every ſtep therefore the conſtitution takes towards a Democratic form, every diminution of the legal authority, is, in fact, a diminution of the ſubjects freedom; but every attempt to render the government more popular, not only impairs natural liberty, but even will, at laſt diſſolve the political conſtitution.

Every popular government ſeems calculated to laſt only for a time; it grows rigid with age; new laws are multiplying, and the old continue in force; the ſubjects are oppreſſed, burthened with a multiplicity of legal injunctions; there are none from whom to expect redreſs, and nothing but a ſtrong convulſion

vulſion in the ſtate can vindicate them into former liberty: thus the people of Rome, a few great ones excepted, found more real freedom under their emperors, though tyrants, than they had experienced in the old age of the commonwealth, in which their laws were become numerous and painful; in which new laws were every day enacting, and the old ones executed with rigour. They even refuſed to be reinſtated in their former prerogatives, upon an offer made them to this purpoſe; for they actually found emperors the only means of ſoftening the rigours of their conſtitution.

The conſtitution of England is at preſent poſſeſſed of the ſtrength of its native oak, and the flexibility of the bending tamariſk; but ſhould the people at any time, with a miſtaken zeal, pant after an imaginary freedom, and fancy that abridging monarchy was encreaſing their privileges, they would be very much miſtaken, ſince every jewel plucked from the crown of majeſty, would only be made uſe of as a bribe to corruption; it might enrich the few who ſhared it among them, but would, in fact, impoveriſh the public.

As the Roman ſenators by ſlow and imperceptible degrees became maſters of the people, yet ſtill flattered

flattered them with a ſhew of freedom, while themſelves only were free; ſo is it poſſible for a body of men, while they ſtand up for privileges, to grow into an exuberance of power themſelves, and the public become actually dependent, while ſome of its individuals only governed.

If then, my friends, there ſhould in this country ever be on the throne a king, who through good nature or age ſhould give up the ſmalleſt part of his prerogative to the people; if there ſhould come a miniſter of merit and popularity—But I have room for no more. Adieu.

LETTER LI.

To the ſame.

AS I was yeſterday ſeated at breakfaſt over a penſive diſh of tea, my meditations were interrupted by my old friend and companion, who introduced a ſtranger, dreſſed pretty much like himſelf. The gentleman made ſeveral apologies for his viſit, begged of me to impute his intruſion to the ſincerity of his reſpect, and the warmth of his curioſity.

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As I am very ſuſpicious of my company, when I find them very civil without any apparent reaſon, I anſwered the ſtranger's careſſes at firſt with reſerve; which my friend perceiving, inſtantly let me into my viſitant's trade and character, aſking Mr Fudge, whether he had lately publiſhed any thing new? I now conjectured that my gueſt was no other than a bookſeller, and his anſwer confirmed my ſuſpicions.

"Excuſe me, Sir," ſays he, "it is not the ſeaſon; books have their time as well as cucumbers. I would no more bring out a new work in ſummer, than I would ſell pork in the dog-days. Nothing in my way goes off in ſummer, except very light goods indeed. A review, a magazine, or a ſeſſions-paper, may amuſe a ſummer reader; but all our ſtock of value we reſerve for a ſpring and winter trade."—"I muſt confeſs, Sir," ſays I, "a curioſity to know what you call a valuable ſtock, which can only bear a winter peruſal."—"Sir," replied the bookſeller, "it is not my way to cry up my own goods; but without exaggeration I will venture to ſhew with any of the trade; my books at leaſt have the peculiar advantage of being always new; and it is my way to clear off my old to the trunkmakers every ſeaſon. I have ten new title-

pages

pages now about me, which only want books to be added to make them the fineſt things in nature. Others may pretend to direct the vulgar; but that is not my way; I always let the vulgar direct me; wherever popular clamour ariſes, I always echo the million. For inſtance, ſhould the people in general ſay that ſuch a man is a rogue, I inſtantly give orders to ſet him down in print a villain: thus every man buys the book, not to learn new ſentiments, but to have the pleaſure of ſeeing his own reflected."—"But, Sir," interrupted I, "you ſpeak as if you yourſelf wrote the books you publiſh; may I be ſo bold as to aſk a ſight of ſome of thoſe intended publications which are ſhortly to ſurpriſe the world!"—"As to that, Sir," replied the talkative bookſeller, "I only draw out the plans myſelf; and though I am very cautious of communicating them to any, yet, as in the end I have a favour to aſk, you ſhall ſee a few of them. Here, Sir, here they are; diamonds of the firſt water, I aſſure you. Imprimis, a tranſlation of ſeveral medical precepts for the uſe of ſuch phyſicians as do not underſtand Latin. Item, the young clergyman's art of placing patches regularly, with a diſſertation on the different manner of ſmiling without diſtorting the face. Item, the whole art of love made perfectly eaſy, by a broker of 'Change-Alley.

Alley. Item, the proper manner of cutting black-lead pencils, and making crayons, by the Right Hon. the Earl of ***. Item, the muſter-maſter-general, or the review of reviews—" "Sir," cried I, interrupting him, "my curioſity with regard to title-pages is ſatisfied; I ſhould be glad to ſee ſome longer manuſcript; an hiſtory, or an epic poem." —"Bleſs me," cries the man of induſtry, "now you ſpeak of an epic poem, you ſhall ſee an excellent farce. Here it is; dip into it where you will, it will be found replete with true modern humour. Strokes, Sir; it is filled with ſtrokes of wit and ſatire in every line."—"Do you call theſe daſhes of the pen ſtrokes," replied I, "for I muſt confeſs I can ſee no other?"—"And pray, Sir," returned he, "what do you call them? Do you ſee any thing good now a-days that is not filled with ſtrokes —and daſhes?—Sir, a well placed daſh makes half the wit of our writers of modern humour. I bought a piece laſt ſeaſon that had no other merit upon earth than nine hundred and ninety-five breaks, ſeventy-two ha ha's, three good things, and a garter. And yet it played off, and bounced, and cracked, and made more ſport than a fire-work." —"I fancy then, Sir, you were a conſiderable gainer?"—"It muſt be owned the piece did pay; but upon the whole I cannot much boaſt of laſt

winter's ſucceſs; I gained by two murders; but then I loſt by an ill-timed charity ſermon. I was a conſiderable ſufferer by my Direct Road to an Eſtate; but the Infernal Guide brought me up again. Ah, Sir, that was a piece touched off by the hand of a maſter, filled with good things from one end to the other. The author had nothing but the jeſt in view; no dull moral lurking beneath, nor ill-natured ſatire to ſour the reader's good humour; he wiſely conſidered that moral and humour, at the ſame time, were quite over doing the buſineſs."—"To what purpoſe was the book then publiſhed?" cried I. "Sir, the book was publiſhed in order to be ſold; and no book ſold better, except the criticiſms upon it, which came out ſoon after. Of all kinds of writings, that goes off beſt at preſent; and I generally faſten a criticiſm upon every ſelling book that is publiſhed.

"I once had an author who never left the leaſt opening for the critics; cloſe was the word; always very right, and very dull; ever on the ſame ſide of an argument; yet, with all his qualifications, incapable of coming into favour. I ſoon perceived that his bent was for criticiſm; and as he was good for nothing elſe, ſupplied him with pens and paper, and planted him at the beginning of every month

as a cenſor on the works of others. In ſhort, I found him a treaſure; no merit could eſcape him: but what is moſt remarkable of all, he ever wrote beſt and bittereſt when drunk."—"But are there not ſome works," interrupted I, "that, from the very manner of their compoſition, muſt be exempt from criticiſm; particularly ſuch as profeſs to diſregard its laws?"—"There is no work whatſoever but he can criticiſe," replied the bookſeller; "even though you wrote in Chineſe he would have a pluck at you. Suppoſe you ſhould take it into your head to publiſh a book, let it be a volume of Chineſe letters, for inſtance; write how you will, he ſhall ſhew the world you could have written better. Should you, with the moſt local exactneſs, ſtick to the manners and cuſtoms of the country from whence you come; ſhould you confine yourſelf to the narrow limits of eaſtern knowledge, and be perfectly ſimple, and perfectly natural, he has then the ſtrongeſt reaſon to exclaim. He may with a ſneer ſend you back to China for readers. He may obſerve, that after the firſt or ſecond letter the iteration of the ſame ſimplicity is inſupportably tedious; but the worſt of all is, the public in ſuch a caſe will anticipate his cenſures, and leave you, with all your uninſtructive ſimplicity, to be mauled at diſcretion."

"Yes," cried I; "but, in order to avoid his indignation, and what I ſhould fear more, that of the public, I would, in ſuch a caſe, write with all the knowledge I was maſter of. As I am not poſſeſſed of much learning, at leaſt I would not ſuppreſs what little I had; nor would I appear more ſtupid than nature made me."—"Here then," cries the bookſeller, "we ſhould have you entirely in our power; 'unnatural, uneaſtern; quite out of character; erroneouſly ſenſible;' would be the whole cry. Sir, we ſhould then hunt you down like a rat."—"Head of my father!" ſaid I, "ſure there are but two ways; the door muſt either be ſhut, or it muſt be open. I muſt either be natural or unnatural."—"Be what you will, we ſhall criticiſe you," returned the bookſeller, "and prove you a dunce in ſpite of your teeth. But, Sir, it is time that I ſhould come to buſineſs. I have juſt now in the preſs an hiſtory of China; and, if you will but put your name to it as the author, I ſhall repay the obligation with gratitude."—"What, Sir," replied I, "put my name to a work which I have not written! Never while I retain a proper reſpect for the public and myſelf." The bluntneſs of my reply quite abated the ardour of the bookſeller's converſation; and, after half an hour's diſagreeable

able reſerve, he, with ſome ceremony, took his leave and withdrew. Adieu.

LETTER LII.

To the ſame.

IN all other countries, my dear Fum Hoam, the rich are diſtinguiſhed by their dreſs. In Perſia, China, and moſt parts of Europe, thoſe who are poſſeſſed of much gold or ſilver, put ſome of it upon their cloaths; but in England, thoſe who carry much upon their cloaths, are remarked for having but little in their pockets. A tawdry outſide is regarded as a badge of poverty; and thoſe who can ſit at home and glote over their thouſands in ſilent ſatisfaction, are generally found to do it in plain cloaths.

This diverſity of thinking from the reſt of the world which prevails here, I was firſt at a loſs to account for; but am ſince informed that it was introduced by an intercourſe between them and their neighbours the French; who, whenever they came in order to pay thoſe iſlanders a viſit, were gene-

rally

rally very well dreſſed, and very poor, daubed with lace, but all the gilding on the outſide. By this means laced cloaths have been brought ſo much into contempt, that at preſent even their mandarines are aſhamed of finery.

I muſt own myſelf a convert to Engliſh ſimplicity; I am no more for oſtentation of wealth than of learning; the perſon who in company ſhould pretend to be wiſer than others, I am apt to regard as illiterate and ill-bred; the perſon whoſe cloaths are extremely fine, I am too apt to conſider as not being poſſeſſed of any ſuperiority of fortune, but reſembling thoſe Indians who are found to wear all the gold they have in the world in a bob at the noſe.

I was lately introduced into a company of the beſt dreſſed men I have ſeen ſince my arrival. Upon entering the room, I was ſtruck with awe at the grandeur of the different dreſſes. "That perſonage," thought I, "in blue and gold, muſt be ſome emperor's ſon; that, in green and ſilver, a prince of the blood; he, in embroidered ſcarlet, a prime miniſter; all firſt-rate noblemen, I ſuppoſe, and well looking noblemen too." I ſat for ſome time with that uneaſineſs which conſcious inferiority produces in the ingenuous mind, all attention to their

diſcourſe

diſcourſe. However, I found their converſation more vulgar than I could have expected from perſonages of ſuch diſtinction. "If theſe," thought I to myſelf, "be princes, they are the moſt ſtupid princes I have ever converſed with." Yet ſtill I continued to venerate their dreſs; for dreſs has a kind of mechanical influence on the mind.

My friend in black indeed did not behave with the ſame deference, but contradicted the fineſt of them all in the moſt peremptory tones of contempt. But I had ſcarce time to wonder at the imprudence of his conduct, when I found occaſion to be equally ſurpriſed at the abſurdity of theirs; for, upon the entry of a middle-aged man, dreſſed in a cap, dirty ſhirt, and boots, the whole circle ſeemed diminiſhed of their former importance, and contended who ſhould be firſt to pay their obeiſance to the ſtranger. They ſomewhat reſembled a circle of Kalmucs offering incenſe to a bear.

Eager to know the cauſe of ſo much ſeeming contradiction, I whiſpered my friend out of the room, and found that the auguſt company conſiſted of no other than a dancing-maſter, two fiddlers, and a third-rate actor, all aſſembled in order to make a ſet at country-dances, as the middle-aged gentle-

man

man whom I ſaw enter was a ſquire from the country, and deſirous of learning the new manner of footing, and ſmoothing up the rudiments of his rural minuet.

I was no longer ſurpriſed at the authority which my friend aſſumed among them; nay, was even diſpleaſed (pardon my eaſtern education) that he had not kicked every creature of them down ſtairs. "What," ſaid I, "ſhall a ſet of ſuch paltry fellows dreſs themſelves up like ſons of kings, and claim even the tranſitory reſpect of half an hour! There ſhould be ſome law to reſtrain ſo manifeſt a breach of privilege; they ſhould go from houſe to houſe, as in China, with the inſtruments of their profeſſion ſtrung round their necks; by this means we might be able to diſtinguiſh, and treat them in a ſtile of becoming contempt."—"Hold, my friend," replied my companion, "were your reformation to take place, as dancing maſters and fiddlers now mimic gentlemen in appearance, we ſhould then find our fine gentlemen conforming to theirs. A beau might be introduced to a lady of faſhion with a fiddle-caſe hanging at his neck by a red ribbon; and, inſtead of a cane, might carry a fiddle-ſtick. Though to be as dull as a firſt-rate dancing maſter might be uſed with proverbial juſtice; yet, dull as he

he is, many a fine gentleman ſets him up as the proper ſtandard of politeneſs; copies not only the pert vivacity of his air, but the flat inſipidity of his converſation. In ſhort, if you make a law againſt dancing maſters imitating the fine gentleman, you ſhould with as much reaſon enact, that no fine gentleman ſhall imitate the dancing maſter."

After I had left my friend, I made towards home, reflecting as I went upon the difficulty of diſtinguiſhing men by their appearance. Invited, however, by the freſhneſs of the evening, I did not return directly, but went to ruminate on what had paſſed in a public garden belonging to the city. Here, as I ſat upon one of the benches, and felt the pleaſing ſympathy which nature in bloom inſpires, a diſconſolate figure, who ſat on the other end of the ſeat, ſeemed no way to enjoy the ſerenity of the ſeaſon.

His dreſs was miſerable beyond deſcription; a thread bare coat of the rudeſt materials; a ſhirt, though clean, yet extremely coarſe; hair that ſeemed to have been long unconſcious of the comb; and all the reſt of his equipage impreſſed with the marks of genuine poverty.

As he continued to ſigh, and teſtify every ſymptom of deſpair, I was naturally led, from a motive of humanity, to offer comfort and aſſiſtance. You know my heart; and that all who are miſerable may claim a place there. The penſive ſtranger at firſt declined any converſation; but at laſt, perceiving a peculiarity in my accent and manner of thinking, he began to unfold himſelf by degrees.

I now found that he was not ſo very miſerable as he at firſt appeared; upon my offering him a ſmall piece of money, he refuſed my favour, yet without appearing diſpleaſed at my intended generoſity. It is true, he ſometimes interrupted the converſation with a ſigh, and talked pathetically of neglected merit; yet ſtill I could perceive a ſerenity in his countenance, that, upon a cloſer inſpection, beſpoke inward content.

Upon a pauſe in the converſation, I was going to take my leave, when he begged I would favour him with my company home to ſupper. I was ſurpriſed at ſuch a demand from a perſon of his appearance; but willing to indulge curioſity, I accepted his invitation; and though I felt ſome repugnance at being ſeen with one who appeared ſo very wretched, went along with ſeeming alacrity.

Still

Still as he approached nearer home, his good humour proportionably ſeemed to encreaſe. At laſt he ſtopped, not at the gate of an hovel, but of a magnificent palace! When I caſt my eyes upon all the ſumptuous elegance which every where preſented upon entering, and then when I looked at my ſeeming miſerable conductor, I could ſcarce think that all this finery belonged to him; yet in fact it did. Numerous ſervants ran through the apartments with ſilent aſſiduity; ſeveral ladies of beauty, and magnificently dreſſed, came to welcome his return; a moſt elegant ſupper was provided; in ſhort, I found the perſon, whom a little before I had ſincerely pitied, to be in reality a moſt refined epicure;—"One who courted contempt abroad, in order to feel with keener guſt the pleaſure of pre-eminence at home." Adieu.

LETTER LIII.

From the ſame.

HOW often have we admired the eloquence of Europe! That ſtrength of thinking, that delicacy of imagination, even beyond the efforts of the Chi-

neſe themſelves? How were we enraptured with thoſe bold figures which ſent every ſentiment with force to the heart! How have we ſpent whole days together in learning thoſe arts by which European writers got within the paſſions, and led the reader as if by enchantment!

But though we have learned moſt of the rhetorical figures of the laſt age, yet there ſeems to be one or two of great uſe here, which have not yet travelled to China. The figures I mean are called *Bawdy* and *Pertneſs*: none are more faſhionable; none ſo ſure of admirers; they are of ſuch a nature, that the mereſt blockhead, by a proper uſe of them, ſhall have the reputation of a wit; they lye level to the meaneſt capacities, and addreſs thoſe paſſions which all have, or would be aſhamed to diſown.

It has been obſerved, and I believe with ſome truth, that it is very difficult for a dunce to obtain the reputation of a wit; yet, by the aſſiſtance of the figure *Bawdy*, this may be eaſily affected, and a bawdy blockhead often paſſes for a fellow of ſmart parts and pretenſions. Every object in nature helps the jokes forward, without ſcarce any effort of the imagination. If a lady ſtands, ſomething very good

may

may be ſaid upon that; if ſhe happens to fall, with the help of a little faſhionable pruriency, there are forty ſly things ready on the occaſion. But a prurient jeſt has always been found to give moſt pleaſure to a few old gentlemen, who being in ſome meaſure dead to their ſenſations, feel the force of the alluſion with double violence on the organs of riſibility.

An author who writes in this manner is generally ſure, therefore, of having the very old and the impotent among his admirers; for theſe he may properly be ſaid to write, and from theſe he ought to expect his reward, his works being often a very proper ſuccedaneum to cantharides, or an aſſafœtida pill. His pen ſhould be conſidered in the ſame light as the ſquirt of an apothecary, both being directed at the ſame generous end.

But though this manner of writing be perfectly adapted to the taſte of gentlemen and ladies of faſhion here, yet ſtill it deſerves greater praiſe in being equally ſuited to the moſt vulgar apprehenſions. The very ladies and gentlemen of Benin, or Cafraria, are in this reſpect tolerably polite, and might reliſh a prurient joke of this kind with critical propriety; probably, too, with higher guſt,

as

as they wear neither breeches nor petticoats to intercept the application.

It is certain, I never could have expected the ladies here, biaſſed as they are by education, capable at once of bravely throwing off their prejudices, and not only applauding books in which this figure makes the only merit, but even adopting it in their own converſation. Yet, ſo it is; the pretty innocents now carry thoſe books openly in their hands, which formerly were hid under the cuſhion; they now liſp their double meanings with ſo much grace, and talk over the raptures they beſtow with ſuch little reſerve, that I am ſome times reminded of a cuſtom among the entertainers in China, who think it a piece of neceſſary breeding to whet the appetites of their gueſts, by letting them ſmell dinner in the kitchen before it is ſerved up to table.

The veneration we have for many things, entirely proceeds from their being carefully concealed. Were the idolatrous Tartar permitted to lift the veil which keeps his idol from view, it might be a certain method to cure his future ſuperſtition: with what a noble ſpirit of freedom, therefore, muſt that writer be poſſeſſed, who bravely paints things as they are, who lifts the veil of modeſty, who diſ-

plays

plays the moſt hidden receſſes of the temple, and ſhews the erring people that the object of their views is either perhaps a mouſe or a monkey?

However, though this figure be at preſent ſo much in faſhion; though the profeſſors of it are ſo much careſſed by the great, thoſe perfect judges of literary excellence; yet it is confeſſed to be only a revival of what was once faſhionable here before. There was a time, when by this very manner of writing, the gentle Tom Durfey, as I read in Engliſh authors, acquired his great reputation, and became the favorite of a king.

The works of this original genius, though they never travelled abroad to China, and ſcarce have reached poſterity at home, were once found upon every faſhionable toilet, and made the ſubject of polite, I mean very polite, converſation. "Has your Grace ſeen Mr Durfey's laſt new thing, the Oylet Hole! A moſt facetious piece. Sure, my Lord, all the world muſt have ſeen it; Durfey is certainly the moſt comical creature alive. It is impoſſible to read his things and live. Was there ever any thing ſo natural and pretty, as when the Squire and Bridget meet in the cellar. And then the difficulties they both find in broaching the beer

barrel

barrel are ſo arch and ſo ingenious! We have certainly nothing of this kind in the language." In this manner they ſpoke then, and in this manner they ſpeak now; for though the ſucceſſor of Durfey does not excel him in wit, the world muſt confeſs he out does him in obſcenity.

There are ſeveral very dull fellows, who, by a few mechanical helps, ſometimes learn to become extremely brilliant and pleaſing, with a little dexterity in the management of the eye-brows, fingers, and noſe. By imitating a cat, a ſow and a pig; by a loud laugh, and a ſlap on the ſhoulder, the moſt ignorant are furniſhed out for converſation. But the writer finds it impoſſible to throw his winks, his ſhrugs, or his attitudes upon paper; he may borrow ſome aſſiſtance, indeed, by printing his face at the title-page; but without wit to paſs for a man of ingenuity, no other mechanical help but downright obſcenity will ſuffice. By ſpeaking to ſome peculiar ſenſations, we are always ſure of exciting laughter, for the jeſt does not lie in the writer, but in the ſubject.

But Bawdy is often helped on by another figure called *Pertneſs*; and few, indeed, are found to excel in one, that are not poſſeſſed of the other.

As

As in common converſation, the beſt way to make the audience laugh, is by firſt laughing yourſelf; ſo in writing, the propereſt manner is to ſhew an attempt at humour, which will paſs upon moſt for humour in reality. To effect this, readers muſt be treated with the moſt perfect familiarity: in one page the author is to make them a low bow, and in the next to pull them by the noſe: he muſt talk in riddles, and then ſend them to bed, in order to dream for the ſolution. He muſt ſpeak of himſelf and his chapters, and his manner, and what he would be at, and his own importance, and his mother's importance, with the moſt unpitying prolixity: now and then teſtifying his contempt for all but himſelf, ſmiling without a jeſt, and without wit poſſeſſing vivacity. Adieu.

LETTERS LIV & LV,

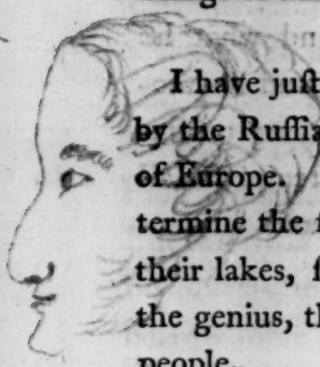
Are Copies of ESSAYS X & XI——

VOL. I. Page 127.

LETTER LVI.

From FUM HOAM, *to* LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *the diſcontented wanderer.*

THE diſtant ſounds of muſic that catch new ſweetneſs as they vibrate through the long drawn valley, are not more pleaſing to the ear than the tidings of a far diſtant friend.



I have juſt received two hundred of thy letters by the Ruſſian caravan, deſcriptive of the manners of Europe. You have left it to geographers to determine the ſize of their mountains, and extent of their lakes, ſeeming only employed in diſcovering the genius, the government, and diſpoſition, of the people.

In thoſe letters I perceive a journal of the operations of your mind upon whatever occurs, rather than a detail of your travels from one building to another; of your taking a draught of this ruin, or that obeliſk; of paying ſo many Tomans for this commodity, or laying up a proper ſtore for the paſſage of ſome new wilderneſs.

From

From your account of Ruſſia I learn, that this nation is again relaxing into priſtine barbarity, that its great Emperor wanted a life of an hundred years more to bring about his vaſt deſign. A ſavage people may be reſembled to their own foreſt; a few years are ſufficient to clear away the obſtructions to agriculture; but it requires many ere the ground acquires a proper degree of fertility. The Ruſſians, attached to their ancient prejudices, again renew their hatred to ſtrangers, and indulge every former brutal exceſs. So true it is, that the revolutions of wiſdom are ſlow and difficult; the revolutions of folly or ambition precipitate and eaſy. "We are not to be aſtoniſhed," ſays Confucius*, "that the wiſe walk more ſlowly in their road to virtue, than fools in their paſſage to vice; ſince paſſion drags us along, while wiſdom only points out the way."

The German Empire, that remnant of the Majeſty of ancient Rome, appears from your account on the eve of diſſolution. The members of its vaſt body want every tie of government to unite them, and ſeem feebly held together only by their reſpect

* Though this fine maxim be not found in the Latin edition of the morals of Confucius, yet we find it aſcribed to him by Le Comte. Etat preſente de la Chine. Vol. I. p. 348.

for an ancient inſtitution. The very name of country and countrymen, which in other nations makes one of the ſtrongeſt bonds of government, has been here for ſome time laid aſide, each of its inhabitants ſeeming more proud of being called from the petty ſtate which gives him birth, than by the well known title of German.

This government may be regarded in the light of a ſevere maſter, and a feeble opponent. The States which are now ſubject to the laws of the Empire, are only watching a proper occaſion to fling off the yoke; and thoſe which are become too powerful to be compelled to obedience, now begin to think of dictating in their turn. The ſtruggles in this ſtate are therefore not in order to preſerve, but to deſtroy, the ancient conſtitution; if one ſide ſucceeds, the government muſt become deſpotic; if the other, ſeveral ſtates will ſubſiſt without even nominal ſubordination; but in either caſe the Germanic conſtitution will be no more.

Sweden, on the contrary, though now ſeemingly a ſtrenuous aſſertor of its liberties, is probably only haſtening on to deſpotiſm. Their ſenators, while they pretend to vindicate the freedom of the people, are only eſtabliſhing their own independence.

The

The deluded people will, however, at laſt perceive the miſeries of an ariſtocratical government; they will perceive that the adminiſtration of a ſociety of men is ever more painful than that of one only. They will fly from this moſt oppreſſive of all forms, where one ſingle member is capable of controlling the whole, to take refuge under the throne which will ever be attentive to their complaints. No people long endure an ariſtocratical government, when they can apply elſewhere for redreſs. The lower orders of people may be enſlaved for a time by a number of tyrants, but upon the firſt opportunity they will ever take a refuge in deſpotiſm or democracy.

As the Swedes are making concealed approaches to deſpotiſm, the French, on the other hand, are imperceptibly vindicating themſelves into freedom. When I conſider that thoſe parliaments (the members of which are all created by the court, the preſidents of which can act only by immediate direction) preſume even to mention privileges and freedom, who, till of late, received directions from the throne with implicit humility; when this is conſidered, I cannot help fancying that the genius of freedom has entered that kingdom in diſguiſe. If they have but three weak monarchs more, ſucceſſively

ſively on the throne, the maſk will be laid aſide, and the country will certainly once more be free.

When I compare the figure which the Dutch make in Europe, with that they aſſume in Aſia, I am ſtruck with ſurpriſe. In Aſia, I find them the great lords of all the Indian ſeas; in Europe, the timid inhabitants of a paltry ſtate. No longer the ſons of freedom, but of avarice; no longer aſſertors of their rights by courage, but by negociations; fawning on thoſe who inſult them, and crouching under the rod of every neighbouring power. Without a friend to ſave them in diſtreſs, and without virtue to ſave themſelves; their government is poor, and their private wealth will ſerve but to invite ſome neighbouring invader.

I long with impatience for your letters from England, Denmark, Holland, and Italy; yet, why wiſh for relations which only deſcribe new calamities, which ſhew that ambition and avarice are equally terrible in every region? Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER LVII.

From LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *to* FUM HOAM, *firſt Preſident of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

I Have frequently admired the manner of criticiſing in China, where the learned are aſſembled in a body to judge of every new publication; to examine the merits of the work without knowing the circumſtances of the author, and then to uſher it into the world with proper marks of reſpect or reprobation.

In England there are no ſuch tribunals erected; but if a man thinks proper to be a judge of genius, few will be at the pains to contradict his pretenſions. If any chuſe to be critics, it is but ſaying they are critics; and from that time forward they become inveſted with full power and authority over every caitiff who aims at their inſtruction or entertainment.

As almoſt every member of ſociety has by this means a vote in literary tranſactions, it is no way ſurpriſing to find the rich leading the way here as in other common concerns in life, to ſee them

them either bribing the numerous herd of voters by their intereſt, or brow-beating them by their authority.

A great man ſays, at his table, that ſuch a book *is no bad thing*. Immediately the praiſe is carried off by five flatterers to be diſperſed at twelve different coffee-houſes, from whence it circulates, ſtill improving as it proceeds, through forty-five houſes, where cheaper liquors are ſold; from thence it is carried away by the honeſt tradeſman to his own fire-ſide, where the applauſe is eagerly caught up by his wife and children, who have long been taught to regard his judgment as the ſtandard of perfection. Thus, when we have traced a wide extended literary reputation up to its original ſource, we ſhall find it derived from ſome great man, who has, perhaps, received all his education and Engliſh from a tutor of Berne, or a dancing maſter of Picardie.

The Engliſh are a people of good ſenſe; and I am the more ſurpriſed to find them ſwayed in their opinions by men who often, from their very education, are incompetent judges. Men who, being always bred in affluence, ſee the world only on one ſide, are ſurely improper judges of human nature;

nature; they may indeed deſcribe a ceremony, a pageant, or a ball; but how can they pretend to dive into the ſecrets of the human heart, who have been nurſed up only in forms, and daily behold nothing but the ſame inſipid adulation ſmiling upon every face? Few of them have been bred in the beſt of ſchools, the ſchool of adverſity; and, by what I can learn, fewer ſtill have been bred in any ſchool at all.

From ſuch a deſcription, one would think that a droning Duke, or a Dowager Ducheſs was not poſſeſſed of more juſt pretenſions to taſte than perſons of leſs quality; and yet, whatever the one or the other may write or praiſe, ſhall paſs for perfection, without further examination. A nobleman has but to take a pen, ink, and paper, and write away through three large volumes, and then ſign his name to the title-page; though the whole might have been before more diſguſting than his own rent-roll, yet ſigning his name and title gives value to the deed; title being alone equivalent to taſte, imagination, and genius.

As ſoon as a piece, therefore, is publiſhed, the firſt queſtions are—"Who is the author? Does he keep a coach? Where lies his eſtate? What ſort

of a table does he keep?" If he happens to be poor, and unqualified for ſuch a ſcrutiny, he and his works ſink into irremediable obſcurity; and too late he finds, that having fed upon Turtle is a more ready way to fame, than having digeſted Tully.

The poor devil, againſt whom faſhion has ſet its face, vainly alledges, that he has been bred in every part of Europe where knowledge was to be ſold; that he has grown pale in the ſtudy of nature and himſelf; his works may pleaſe upon the peruſal, but his pretenſions to fame are entirely diſregarded; he is treated like a fidler, whoſe muſic, though liked, is not much praiſed, becauſe he lives by it; while a gentleman performer, though the moſt wretched ſcraper alive, throws the audience into raptures. The fidler, indeed, may in ſuch a caſe conſole himſelf by thinking, that while the other goes off with all the praiſe, he runs away with all the money: but here the parallel drops; for while the nobleman triumphs in unmerited applauſe, the author by profeſſion ſteals off with—*Nothing*.

The poor, therefore, here, who draw their pens auxiliary to the laws of their country, muſt think themſelves very happy if they find, not fame, but forgiveneſs;

forgivenneſs; and yet, they are hardly treated; for, as every country grows more polite, the preſs becomes more uſeful; and writers become more neceſſary, as readers are ſuppoſed to increaſe. In a poliſhed ſociety, that man, though in rags, who has the power of enforcing virtue from the preſs, is of more real uſe than forty ſtupid brachmans or bronzes, or guebres, though they preached never ſo often, never ſo loud, or never ſo long. That man, though in rags, who is capable of deceiving even indolence into wiſdom, and who profeſſes amuſement while he aims at reformation, is more uſeful in refined ſociety than twenty cardinals with all their ſcarlet, and tricked out in all the fopperies of ſcholaſtic finery.

LETTER LVIII.

To the ſame.

AS the man in black takes every opportunity of introducing me to ſuch company as may ſerve to indulge my ſpeculative temper, or gratify my curioſity, I was by his influence lately invited to a *viſitation* dinner. To underſtand this term, you muſt

know, that it was formerly the cuſtom here for the principal prieſts to go about the country once a-year, and examine upon the ſpot, whether thoſe of ſubordinate orders did their duty, or were qualified for the taſk; whether their temples were kept in proper repair, or the laity pleaſed with their adminiſtration.

Though a viſitation of this nature was very uſeful, yet it was found to be extremely troubleſome, and for many reaſons utterly inconvenient; for as the principal prieſts were obliged to attend at court, in order to ſolicit preferment, it was impoſſible they could at the ſame time attend in the country, which was quite out of the road to promotion: if we add to this the gout, which has been time immemorial a clerical diſorder here, together with the bad wine, and ill dreſſed proviſions that muſt infallibly be ſerved up by the way, it was not ſtrange that the cuſtom has been long diſcontinued. At preſent, therefore, every head of the church, inſtead of going about to viſit his prieſts, is ſatisfied if his prieſts come in a body once a-year to viſit him; by this means the duty of half a year is diſpatched in a day. When aſſembled, he aſks each in his turn, how they have behaved, and are liked; upon which, thoſe who have neglected their duty,

or

or are diſagreeable to the congregation, no doubt accuſe themſelves, and tell him all their faults; for which he reprimands them moſt ſeverely.

The thoughts of being introduced into a company of philoſophers and learned men, (for as ſuch I conceived them) gave me no ſmall pleaſure; I expected our entertainment would reſemble thoſe ſentimental banquets ſo finely deſcribed by Xenophon and Plato; I was hoping ſome Socrates would be brought in from the door, in order to harrangue upon divine love; but as for eating and drinking, I had prepared myſelf to be diſappointed in that particular. I was appriſed, that faſting and temperance were tenets ſtrongly recommended to the profeſſors of Chriſtianity; and I had ſeen the frugality and mortification of the prieſts of the Eaſt: ſo that I expected an entertainment where we ſhould have much reaſoning, and little meat.

Upon being introduced, I confeſs I found no great ſigns of mortification in the faces or perſons of the company. However, I imputed their florid looks to temperance, and their corpulency to a ſedentary way of living. I ſaw ſeveral preparations indeed for dinner, but none for philoſophy. The company ſeemed to gaze upon the table with ſilent

expectation;

expectation; but this I eaſily excuſed. "Men of wiſdom," thought I, "are ever ſlow of ſpeech; they deliver nothing unadviſedly.—'Silence,' ſays Confucius, 'is a friend that will never betray.' They are now probably inventing maxims, or hard ſayings, for their mutual inſtruction, when ſome one ſhall think proper to begin."

My curioſity was now wrought up to the higheſt pitch; I impatiently looked round to ſee if any were going to interrupt the mighty pauſe; when at laſt, one of the company declared, that there was a ſow in his neighbourhood that farrowed fifteen pigs at a litter. This I thought a very prepoſterous beginning: but juſt as another was going to ſecond the remark, dinner was ſerved, which interrupted the converſation for that time.

The appearance of dinner, which conſiſted of a variety of diſhes, ſeemed to diffuſe new chearfulneſs upon every face; ſo that I now expected the philoſophical converſation to begin, as they improved in good humour. The principal prieſt, however, opened his mouth, with only obſerving, that the veniſon had not been kept enough, though he had given ſtrict orders for having it killed ten days before. "I fear," continued he, "it will be found

to

to want the true heathy flavour; you will find nothing of the original wildneſs in it." A prieſt, who ſat next him, having ſmelt it, and wiped his noſe —"Ah, my good lord," cries he, "you are too modeſt, it is perfectly fine; every body knows that no body underſtands keeping veniſon with your lordſhip."——"Ay, and partridges too," interrupted another; "I never find them right any where elſe." His lordſhip was going to reply, when a third took off the attention of the company, by recommending the pig as inimitable. "I fancy, my lord," continues he, "it has been ſmothered in its own blood?"—"If it has been ſmothered in its blood," cried a facetious member, helping himſelf, "we'll now ſmother it in egg ſauce." This poignant piece of humour produced a long loud laugh, which the facetious brother obſerving, and now that he was in luck, willing to ſecond his blow, aſſured the company he would tell them a good ſtory about that: "As good a ſtory," cries he, burſting into a violent fit of laughter himſelf, "as ever you heard in your lives. There was a farmer in my pariſh, who uſed to ſup upon wild ducks and flummery; ſo this farmer—" "Doctor Marrowfat," cries his lordſhip, interrupting him, "give me leave to drink your health"—"ſo, being fond of wild ducks and flummery—" "Doctor," adds a gentleman who

ſat

ſat next him, "let me adviſe you to a wing of this turkey"—"ſo this farmer being fond—" "Hob nob, Doctor, which do you chuſe, white or red?" —"ſo being fond of wild ducks and flummery—" "take care of your hand, Sir, it may dip in the gravy." The Doctor, now looking round, found not a ſingle *eye* diſpoſed to liſten; wherefore, calling for a glaſs of wine, he gulped down the diſappointment and the tale in a bumper.

The converſation now began to be little more than a rhapſody of exclamations; as each had pretty well ſatisfied his own appetite, he now found ſufficient time to preſs others. "Excellent! the very thing! let me recommend the pig; do but taſte the bacon! never eat a better thing in my life; exquiſite! delicious!" This edifying diſcourſe continued through three courſes, which laſted as many hours till every one of the company were unable to ſwallow or utter any thing more.

It is very natural for men who are abridged in one exceſs, to break into ſome other. The clergy here, particularly thoſe who are advanced in years, think if they are abſtemious with regard to women and wine, they may indulge their other appetites without cenſure. Thus ſome are found to riſe in the morning

morning only to a conſultation with their cook about dinner; and when that has been ſwallowed, make no other uſe of their faculties, (if they have any) but to ruminate on the ſucceeding meal.

A debauch in wine is even more pardonable than this, ſince one glaſs inſenſibly leads on to another, and inſtead of ſating whets the appetite. The progreſſive ſteps to it are chearful and ſeducing; the grave are animated, the melancholy relieved, and there is even claſſic authority to countenance the exceſs. But in eating after nature is once ſatisfied, every additional morſel brings ſtupidity and diſtempers with it, and, as one of their own poets expreſſes it—

The ſoul ſubſides, and wickedly inclines,
To ſeem but mortal, even in ſound divines.

Let me ſuppoſe, after ſuch a meal as this I have been deſcribing, while all the company are ſitting in lethargic ſilence round the table, grunting under a load of ſoup, pig, pork, and bacon; let me ſuppoſe, I ſay, ſome hungry beggar, with looks of want, peeping through one of the windows, and thus addreſſing the aſſembly: "Pr'ythee, pluck thoſe napkins from your chins; after nature is ſatisfied, all that you eat extraordinary is my property,

and I claim it as mine. It was given you in order to relieve me, and not to oppreſs yourſelves. How can they comfort or inſtruct others, who can ſcarce feel their own exiſtence, except from the unſavoury returns of an ill-digeſted meal? But though neither you, nor the cuſhions you ſit upon, will hear me, yet the world regards the exceſſes of its teachers with a prying eye, and notes their conduct with double ſeverity." I know no other anſwer any one of the company could make to ſuch an expoſtulation, but this: "Friend, you talk of our loſing a character, and being diſliked by the world; well, and ſuppoſing all this to be true, what then! who cares for the world? We'll preach for the world, and the world ſhall pay us for preaching, whether we like each other or not."

LETTER. LIX.

From HINPO, *to* LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *by the way of Moſcow.*

YOU will probably be pleaſed to ſee my letter dated from Terki, a city which lies beyond the bounds of the Perſian empire: here, bleſſed with ſecurity,

ſecurity, with all that is dear, I double my raptures, by communicating them to you; the mind ſympathizing with the freedom of the body, my whole ſoul is dilated in gratitude, love, and praiſe.

Yet, were my own happineſs all that inſpired my preſent joy, my raptures might juſtly merit the imputation of ſelf-intereſt; but when I think that the beautiful Zelis is alſo free, forgive my triumph, when I boaſt of having reſcued from captivity the moſt deſerving object upon earth.

You remember the reluctance ſhe teſtified, at being obliged to marry the tyrant ſhe hated. Her compliance at laſt was only feigned, in order to gain time to try ſome future means of eſcape. During the interval between her promiſe and the intended performance of it, ſhe came undiſcovered, one evening, to the place where I generally retired after the fatigues of the day; her appearance was like that of an aerial genius, when it deſcends to miniſter comfort to undeſerved diſtreſs; the mild luſtre of her eye ſerved to baniſh my timidity: her accents were ſweeter than the echo of ſome diſtant ſymphony. "Unhappy ſtranger," ſaid ſhe, in the Perſian language, "you here perceive one more wretched than thyſelf; all this ſolemnity of prepa-

ration, this elegance of dreſs, and the number of my attendants, ſerve but to encreaſe my miſeries; if you have courage to reſcue an unhappy woman from approaching ruin, and our deteſted tyrant, you may depend upon my future gratitude." I bowed to the ground, and ſhe left me filled with rapture and aſtoniſhment. Night brought me no reſt; nor could the enſuing morning calm the anxieties of my mind. I projected a thouſand methods for her delivery; but each, when ſtrictly examined, appeared impracticable; in this uncertainty, the evening again arrived, and I placed myſelf on my former ſtation, in hopes of a repeated viſit. After ſome ſhort expectation, the bright perfection again appeared: I bowed, as before, to the ground; when, raiſing me up, ſhe obſerved, that the time was not to be ſpent in uſeleſs ceremony; ſhe obſerved, that the day following was appointed for the celebration of her nuptials, and that ſomething was to be done that very night for our mutual deliverance. I offered, with the utmoſt humility, to purſue whatever ſcheme ſhe ſhould direct; upon which ſhe propoſed that inſtant to ſcale the garden wall; adding, that ſhe had prevailed upon a female ſlave, who was now waiting at the appointed place, to aſſiſt her with a ladder.

Purſuant

Purſuant to this information, I led her trembling to the place appointed; but, inſtead of the ſlave we expected to ſee, Moſtadad himſelf was there awaiting our arrival; the wretch, in whom we confided, it ſeems had betrayed our deſign to her maſter, and he now ſaw the moſt convincing proofs of her information. He was juſt going to draw his ſabre, when a principle of avarice repreſſed his fury, and he reſolved, after a ſevere chaſtiſement, to diſpoſe of me to another maſter; in the mean time, ordered me to be confined in the ſtricteſt manner, and next day to receive an hundred blows on the ſoles of my feet.

When the morning came, I was led out in order to receive the puniſhment, which, from the ſeverity with which it is generally inflicted upon ſlaves, is worſe even than death.

A trumpet was to be a ſignal for the ſolemnization of the nuptials of Zelis, and for the infliction of my puniſhment. Each ceremony, to me equally dreadful, was juſt going to begin, when we were informed that a large party of Circaſſian Tartars had invaded the town, and were laying all in ruin. Every perſon now thought of only ſaving himſelf; I inſtantly unlooſed the cords with which I was bound,

bound, and ſeizing a ſcymetar from one of the ſlaves who had not courage to reſiſt me, flew to the womens apartment where Zelis was confined, dreſſed out for the intended nuptials. I bade her follow me without delay; and going forward, cut my way through the eunuchs, who made but a faint reſiſtance. The whole city was now a ſcene of conflagration and terror; every perſon was willing to ſave himſelf, unmindful of others. In this confuſion, ſeizing upon two of the fleeteſt courſers in the ſtables of Moſtadad, we fled northward, towards the kingdom of Circaſſia. As there were ſeveral others flying in the ſame manner, we paſſed without notice, and in three days arrived at Terki, a city that lies in a valley within the boſom of the frowning mountains of Caucaſus.

Here, free from every apprehenſion of danger, we enjoy all thoſe ſatisfactions which are conſiſtent with virtue; though I find my heart, at intervals, give way to unuſual paſſions, yet ſuch is my admiration for my fair companion, that I loſe even tenderneſs in diſtant reſpect. Though her perſon demands particular regard, even among the beauties of Circaſſia, yet is her mind far more lovely. How very different is a woman, who thus has cultivated her underſtanding, and been refined into

delicacy

delicacy of ſentiments, from the daughters of the eaſt, whoſe education is only formed to improve the perſon, and make them more tempting objects of proſtitution! Adieu.

LETTER LX.

From HINGPO, *to* LIEN CHI ALTANGI, *by the way of Moſcow.*

WHEN ſufficiently refreſhed after the fatigues of our precipitate flight, my curioſity, which had been reſtrained by the appearance of immediate danger, now began to revive: I longed to know, by what diſtreſsful accidents my fair fugitive became a captive, and could not avoid teſtifying a ſurpriſe, how ſo much beauty could be involved in the calamities from whence ſhe had been ſo lately reſcued.

"Talk not of perſonal charms," cried ſhe, with emotion, "ſince to them I owe every misfortune: look round on the numberleſs beauties of the country where we are, and ſee how nature has poured its charms upon every face; and yet, by this profuſion,

fuſion, heaven would ſeem to ſhew how little it regards ſuch a bleſſing, ſince the gift is laviſhed upon a nation of proſtitutes.

"I perceive you deſire to know my ſtory, and your curioſity is not ſo great as my impatience to gratify it: I find a pleaſure in telling paſt misfortunes to any; but when my deliverer is pleaſed with the relation, my pleaſure is prompted by duty.

"* I was born in a country far to the weſt, where the men are braver, and the women more fair, than thoſe of Circaſſia; where the valour of the hero is guided by wiſdom, and where delicacy of ſentiment points the ſhafts of female beauty. I was the only daughter of an officer in the army, the child of his age: and, as he uſed fondly to expreſs it, the only chain that bound him to the world, or made his life pleaſing. His ſtation procured him an acquaintance with men of greater rank and fortune than himſelf; and his regard for me induced him to bring me into every family where he was acquainted. Thus I was early taught all the elegancies and faſhionable foibles of ſuch as

* This ſtory bears a ſtriking ſimilitude to the real hiſtory of Miſs S——d, who accompanied Lady W——e, in her retreat near Florence, and which the editor had from her own mouth.

as the world calls polite; and, though without fortune myſelf, was taught to deſpiſe thoſe who lived as if they were poor.

"My intercourſe with the great, and my affection of grandeur, procured me many lovers: but want of fortune deterred them all from any other views than thoſe of paſſing the preſent moment agreeably, or of meditating my future ruin. In every company I found myſelf addreſſed in a warmer ſtrain of paſſion than other ladies who were ſuperior in point of rank and beauty; and this I imputed to an exceſs of reſpect, which in reality proceeded from very different motives.

"Among the number of ſuch as paid me their addreſſes, was a gentleman, a friend of my father, rather in the decline of life, with nothing remarkable, either in his perſon or addreſs, to recommend him. His age, which was about forty, his fortune, which was moderate, and barely ſufficient to ſupport him, ſerved to throw me off my guard; ſo that I conſidered him as the only ſincere admirer I had.

"Deſigning lovers, in the decline of life, are ever moſt dangerous. Skilled in all the weakneſſes

of the ſex, they ſeize each favourable opportunity; and by having leſs paſſion than youthful admirers, have leſs real reſpect, and therefore leſs timidity. This inſidious wretch uſed a thouſand arts to ſucceed in his baſe deſigns; all which I ſaw, but imputed to different views, becauſe I thought it abſurd to believe the real motives.

"As he continued to frequent my father's, the friendſhip between them became every day greater; and at laſt, from the intimacy with which he was received, I was taught to look upon him as a guardian and a friend. Though I never loved, yet I eſteemed him; and this was enough to make me wiſh for an union, for which he ſeemed deſirous, but to which he feigned ſeveral delays; while, in the mean time, from a falſe report of our being married, every other admirer forſook me.

"I was at laſt, however, awakened from the deluſion, by an account of his being juſt married to another young lady with a conſiderable fortune. This was no great mortification to me, as I had always regarded him merely from prudential motives; but it had a very different effect upon my father, who, raſh and paſſionate by nature, and, beſides, ſtimulated by a miſtaken notion of military

tary honour, upbraided his friend in ſuch terms, that a challenge was ſoon given and accepted.

"It was about midnight, when I was awakened by a meſſage from my father, who deſired to ſee me that moment. I roſe with ſome ſurpriſe; and following the meſſenger, attended only by another ſervant, came to a field not far from the houſe, where I found him, the aſſertor of my honour, my only friend and ſupporter, the tutor and companion of my youth, lying on one ſide covered over with blood, and juſt expiring. No tears ſtreamed down my cheeks, nor ſigh eſcaped from my breaſt at an object of ſuch terror. I ſat down, and ſupporting his aged head in my lap, gazed upon the ghaſtly viſage with an agony more poignant even than deſpairing madneſs. The ſervants were gone for more aſſiſtance. In this gloomy ſtillneſs of the night, no ſounds were heard but his agonizing reſpirations; no object was preſented but his wounds, which ſtill continued to ſtream. With ſilent anguiſh I hung over his dear face, and with my hands ſtrove to ſtop the blood as it flowed from his wounds; he ſeemed at firſt inſenſible; but at laſt, turning his dying eyes upon me—'My dear, dear child! cried he; dear, though you have forgotten your own honour, and ſtained mine, I will yet forgive you;

by abandoning virtue, you have undone me and yourſelf, yet take my forgiveneſs with the ſame compaſſion I wiſh heaven may pity me.' He expired. All my ſucceeding happineſs fled with him. Reflecting that I was the cauſe of his death, whom only I loved upon earth; accuſed of betraying the honour of his family with his lateſt breath; conſcious of my own innocence, yet without even a poſſibility of vindicating it; without fortune, or friends to relieve or pity me, abandoned to infamy, and the wide cenſuring world, I called out upon the dead body that lay ſtretched before me, and in the agony of my heart aſked, why he could have left me thus? 'Why, my dear, my only papa, why could you ruin me thus, and yourſelf, for ever! O pity, and return, ſince there is none but you to comfort me!'

"I ſoon found that I had real cauſe for ſorrow; that I was to expect no compaſſion from my own ſex, nor aſſiſtance from the other; and that reputation was much more uſeful in our commerce with mankind, than really to deſerve it. Wherever I came, I perceived myſelf received either with contempt or deteſtation; or whenever I was civilly treated, it was from the moſt baſe and ungenerous motives.

"Thus

"Thus driven from the ſociety of the virtuous, I was at laſt, in order to diſpel the anxieties of inſupportable ſolitude, obliged to take up with the company of thoſe whoſe characters were blaſted like my own; but who, perhaps, deſerved their infamy. Among this number was a lady of the firſt diſtinction, whoſe character the public thought proper to brand even with greater infamy than mine. A ſimilitude of diſtreſs ſoon united us: I knew that general reproach had made her miſerable; and I had learned to regard miſery as an excuſe for guilt. Though this lady had not virtue enough to avoid reproach, yet ſhe had too much delicate ſenſibility not to feel it. She therefore propoſed our leaving the country where we were born, and going to live in Italy, where our characters and misfortunes would be unknown. With this I eagerly complied; and we ſoon found ourſelves in one of the moſt charming retreats in the moſt beautiful province of that enchanting country.

"Had my companion choſen this as a retreat for injured virtue, an harbour where we might look with tranquillity on the diſtant angry world, I ſhould have been happy; but very different was her deſign; ſhe had pitched upon this ſituation only to enjoy thoſe pleaſures in private, which ſhe had

had not ſufficient effrontery to ſatisfy in a more open manner. A nearer acquaintance ſoon ſhowed me the vicious part of her character; her mind, as well as her body, ſeemed formed only for pleaſure; ſhe was ſentimental only as it ſerved to protract the immediate enjoyment. Formed for ſociety alone, ſhe ſpoke infinitely better than ſhe wrote, and wrote infinitely better than ſhe lived. A perſon devoted to pleaſure, often leads the moſt miſerable life imaginable: ſuch was her caſe; ſhe conſidered the natural moments of languor as inſupportable, paſſed all her hours between rapture and anxiety, ever in an extreme of agony or of bliſs. She felt a pain as ſincere for want of appetite, as the ſtarving wretch who wants a meal. In thoſe intervals, ſhe uſually keept her bed, and roſe only when in expectation of ſome new enjoyment. The luxuriant air of the country, the romantic ſituation of her palace, and the genius of a people, whoſe only happineſs lies in ſenſual refinement, all contributed to baniſh the remembrance of her native country.

"But though ſuch a life gave her pleaſure, it had a very different effect upon me; I grew every day more penſive, and my melancholy was regarded as an inſult upon her good humour. I now perceived myſelf entirely unfit for all ſociety; diſcarded

ed from the good, and deteſting the infamous, I ſeemed in a ſtate of war with every rank of people; virtue, which ſhould have been my protection in the world, was here my crime: in ſhort, deteſting life, I was determined to become a recluſe, to leave a world where I found no pleaſure that could allure me to ſtay. Thus determined, I embarked, in order to go by ſea to Rome, where I intended to take the veil; but, even in ſo ſhort a paſſage, my hard fortune ſtill attended me; our ſhip was taken by a Barbary corſair; the whole crew, and I among the number, being made ſlaves. It carries too much the air of romance, to inform you of my diſtreſſes or obſtinacy in this miſerable ſtate; it is enough to obſerve, that I have been bought by ſeveral maſters, each of whom perceiving my reluctance, rather than uſe violence, ſold me to another, till it was my happineſs to be at laſt reſcued by you."

Thus ended her relation, which I have abridged; but as ſoon as we are arrived at Moſcow, for which we intend to ſet out ſhortly, you ſhall be informed of all more particularly. In the mean time, the greateſt addition to my happineſs will be to hear of your's. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER LXI.

From LIEN CHI ALTANGI *to* HINGPO.

THE news of your freedom lifts the load of former anxiety from my mind; I can now think of my ſon without regret, applaud his reſignation under calamities, and his conduct in extricating himſelf from it.

"You are now free, juſt let looſe from the bondage of an hard maſter." This is the criſis of your fate; and as you now manage fortune, ſucceeding life will be marked with happineſs or miſery; a few years perſeverance in prudence, which at your age is but another name for virtue, will enſure comfort, pleaſure, tranquillity, eſteem; too eager an enjoyment of every good that now offers, will reverſe the medal, and preſent you with poverty, anxiety, remorſe, and contempt. * * * * *

The remainder of this Letter *is a Copy of* Eſſay XII. Vol. I. page 138.

LETTER

LETTER LXII.

From the ſame.

A Character ſuch as you have repreſented that of your fair companion, which continues virtuous though loaded with infamy, is truly great. Many regard virtue becauſe it is attended with applauſe; your favourite only for the internal pleaſure it confers. I have often wiſhed that ladies like her were propoſed as models for female imitation, and not ſuch as have acquired fame by qualities repugnant to the natural ſoftneſs of the ſex.

Women famed for their valour, their ſkill in politics, or their learning, leave the duties of their own ſex, in order to invade the privileges of ours. I can no more pardon a fair one for endeavouring to wield the club of Hercules, than I could him for attempting to twirl her diſtaff.

The modeſt virgin, the prudent wife, or the careful matron, are much more ſerviceable in life, than petticoated philoſophers, bluſtering heroines, or virago queens. She who makes her huſband and her children happy, who reclaims the one from

vice, and trains up the other to virtue, is a much greater character than ladies deſcribed in romance, whoſe whole occupation is to murder mankind with ſhafts from their quiver or their eyes.

Women, it has been obſerved, are not naturally formed for great cares themſelves, but to ſoften ours. Their tenderneſs is the proper reward for the dangers we undergo for their preſervation; and the eaſe and chearfulneſs of their converſation, our deſireable retreat from the fatigues of intenſe application. They are confined within the narrow limits of domeſtic aſſiduity; and when they ſtray beyond them, they move beyond their ſphere, and conſequently without grace.

Fame, therefore, has been very unjuſtly diſpenſed among the female ſex. Thoſe who leaſt deſerved to be remembered, meet our admiration and applauſe; while many, who have been an honour to humanity, are paſſed over in ſilence. Perhaps no age has produced a ſtronger inſtance of miſplaced fame than the preſent: the Semiramis and the Thaleſtris of antiquity are talked of, while a modern character, infinitely greater than either, is unnoticed and unknown.

Catharina

Catharina Alexowna, * born near Derpat, a little city in Livonia, was heir to no other inheritance than the virtues and frugality of her parents. Her father being dead, ſhe lived with her aged mother, in their cottage covered with ſtraw; and both, though very poor, were very contented. Here, retired from the gaze of the world, by the labour of her hands ſhe ſupported her parent, who was now incapable of ſupporting herſelf. While Catharina ſpun, the old woman would ſit by, and read ſome book of devotion; thus, when the fatigues of the day were over, both would ſit down contentedly, by their fire ſide, and enjoy the frugal meal with vacant feſtivity.

Though her face and perſon were models of perfection, yet her whole attention ſeemed beſtowed upon her mind; her mother taught her to read, and an old Lutheran miniſter inſtructed her in the maxims and duties of religion. Nature had furniſhed her not only with a ready but a ſolid turn of thought; not only with a ſtrong but a right underſtanding. Such truly female accompliſhments procured her ſeveral ſolicitations of marriage from the peaſants of the country; but their offers were refuſed:

* This account ſeems to be taken from the manuſcript memoirs of H. Spilman, Eſq;

refuſed: for ſhe loved her mother too tenderly to think of a ſeparation.

Catharina was fifteen when her mother died; ſhe now therefore left her cottage, and went to live with the Lutheran miniſter, by whom ſhe had been inſtructed from her childhood. In his houſe ſhe reſided, in quality of governeſs to his children; at once reconciling in her character unerring prudence with ſurpriſing vivacity.

The old man, who regarded her as one of his own children, had her inſtructed in dancing and muſic by the maſters who attended the reſt of his family: thus ſhe continued to improve till he died; by which accident, ſhe was once more reduced to priſtine poverty. The country of Livonia was at this time waſted by war, and lay in a moſt miſerable ſtate of deſolation. Thoſe calamities are ever moſt heavy upon the poor; wherefore Catharina, though poſſeſſed of ſo many accompliſhments, experienced all the miſeries of hopeleſs indigence. Proviſions becoming every day more ſcarce, and her private ſtock being entirely exhauſted, ſhe reſolved at laſt to travel to Marienburgh, a city of greater plenty.

With

With her ſcanty wardrobe packed up in a wallet, ſhe ſet out on her journey on foot: ſhe was to walk through a region miſerable by nature, but rendered ſtill more hideous by the Swedes and Ruſſians, who, as each happened to become maſters, plundered it at diſcretion: but hunger had taught her to deſpiſe the dangers and fatigues of the way.

One evening upon her journey, as ſhe had entered a cottage by the way-ſide, to take up her lodging for the night, ſhe was inſulted by two Swediſh ſoldiers, who inſiſted upon qualifying her, as they termed it, "to follow the camp." They might probably have carried their inſults into violence, had not a ſubaltern officer, accidentally paſſing by, come in to her aſſiſtance. Upon his appearing, the ſoldiers immediately deſiſted; but her thankfulneſs was hardly greater than her ſurpriſe, when ſhe inſtantly recollected in her deliverer the ſon of the Lutheran miniſter, her former inſtructor, benefactor, and friend.

This was an happy interview for Catharina: the little ſtock of money ſhe had brought from home was by this time quite exhauſted; her cloaths were gone, piece by piece, in order to ſatisfy thoſe who had entertained her in their houſes: her generous

countryman,

countryman, therefore, parted with what he could ſpare, to buy her cloaths, furniſhed her with an horſe, and gave her letters of recommendation to Mr Gluck, a faithful friend of his father's, and ſuperintendant at Marienburgh.

Our beautiful ſtranger had only to appear to be well received; ſhe was immediately admitted into the ſuperintendant's family, as governeſs to his two daughters; and, though yet but ſeventeen, ſhewed herſelf capable of inſtructing her ſex, not only in virtue, but politeneſs. Such was her good ſenſe and beauty, that her maſter himſelf, in a ſhort time offered her his hand; which, to his great ſurpriſe, ſhe thought proper to refuſe. Actuated by a principle of gratitude, ſhe was reſolved to marry her deliverer only, even though he had loſt an arm, and was otherwiſe disfigured by wounds in the ſervice.

In order therefore to prevent further ſolicitations from others, as ſoon as the officer came to town upon duty, ſhe offered him her perſon, which he accepted with tranſport, and their nuptials were ſolemnized as uſual. But all the lines of her fortune were to be ſtriking; the very day on which they were married, the Ruſſians laid ſiege to Marienburgh;

burgh; the unhappy ſoldier had now no time to enjoy the well earned pleaſures of matrimony; he was called off before conſummation to an attack, from which he was never after ſeen to return.

In the mean time the ſiege went on with fury, aggravated on one ſide by obſtinacy, on the other by revenge. This war between the two northern powers at that time was truly barbarous: the innocent peaſant, and the harmleſs virgin, often ſhared the fate of the ſoldier in arms. Marienburgh was taken by aſſault; and ſuch was the fury of the aſſailants, that not only the garriſon, but almoſt all the inhabitants, men, women, and children, were put to the ſword; at length, when the carnage was pretty well over, Catharina was found in an oven.

She had been hitherto poor, but ſtill was free; ſhe was now to conform to her hard fate, and learn what it was to be a ſlave: in this ſituation, however, ſhe behaved with piety and humility; and though misfortunes had abated her vivacity, yet ſhe was chearful. The fame of her merit and reſignation reached even Prince Menzikoff, the Ruſſian general; he deſired to ſee her; was ſtruck with her beauty; bought her from the ſoldier, her maſter and placed her under the direction of his own ſiſter.

Here

Here ſhe was treated with all the reſpect which her merit deſerved, while her beauty every day improved with her good fortune.

She had not been long in this ſituation, when Peter the Great, paying the Prince a viſit, Catharina happened to come in with ſome dry fruits, which ſhe ſerved round with peculiar modeſty. The mighty monarch ſaw and was ſtruck with her beauty. He returned the next day, called for the beautiful ſlave, aſked her ſeveral queſtions, and found her underſtanding even more perfect than her perſon.

He had been forced when young, to marry from motives of intereſt; he was now reſolved to marry purſuant to his own inclinations. He immediately inquired the hiſtory of the fair Livonian, who was not yet eighteen. He traced her through the vale of obſcurity, through all the viciſſitudes of her fortune, and found her truly great in them all. The meanneſs of her birth was no obſtruction to his deſign; their nuptials were ſolemnized in private; the Prince aſſuring his courtiers, that virtue alone was the propereſt ladder to a throne.

We

We now ſee Catharina, from the low mud-walled cottage, Empreſs of the greateſt kingdom upon earth. The poor ſolitary wanderer is now ſurrounded by thouſands, who find happineſs in her ſmile. She, who formerly wanted a meal, is now capable of diffuſing plenty upon whole nations. To her fortune ſhe owed a part of this pre-eminence, but to her virtues more.

She ever after retained thoſe great qualities which firſt placed her on a throne; and while the extraordinary Prince, her huſband, laboured for the reformation of his male ſubjects, ſhe ſtudied, in her turn, the improvement of her own ſex. She altered their dreſſes, introduced mixed aſſemblies, inſtituted an order of female knighthood; and at length, when ſhe had greatly filled all the ſtations of Empreſs, friend, wife, and mother, bravely died without regret; regretted by all. Adieu.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

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